



Committee: Senate Finance Committee
Bill Number: SB 778 Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Children and Pregnant Women (Healthy Babies Equity Act)
Hearing Date: March 8, 2022
Position: Support

The Maryland Nurses Association (MNA) strongly supports *Senate Bill 778 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Children and Pregnant Women*. The legislation would provide for Medicaid coverage for pregnant women who would otherwise be ineligible because of immigration status.

Maternal health and mortality has been impacted by rising rates of chronic disease, including diabetes and hypertension.ⁱ These diseases can be managed more effectively with earlier access to prenatal care. However, prenatal care may not be accessible to underserved communities, including immigrant communities.

Medicaid traditionally has not covered individuals who are undocumented or who have been in the U.S. legally for less than five years. By investing State dollars in Medicaid coverage for pregnant women who are immigrants, Maryland would be embracing a critical strategy in increase access to prenatal services.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

ⁱ <https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/mch/Documents/MMR/HG%20%20C2%A7%20A7%2013-1207%2013-1208%20and%20%20C2%A713-1212%20-%20Maryland%20Maternal%20Mortality%20Review%202020.pdf>