

MINISTERS' CONFERENCE OF BALTIMORE AND VICINITY



Testimony in SUPPORT of SB778
Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Children and Pregnant People
(Healthy Babies Equity Act)
Senate Finance Committee

**Bishop Reginald Kennedy,
President Ministers' Conference of Baltimore & Vicinity (MCBV)**

March 7, 2022

Dear Members of the Committee:

MCBV is submitting this testimony in support for SB778, Healthy Babies Equity Act. We hope that with the passing of this bill eligibility for prenatal care through Medicaid to pregnant people, regardless of status, would be expanded. This change in eligibility would require the state to submit a state innovation waiver (under 1115 of the Social Security Act) to allow Maryland to make this change to eligibility. It would cover care through pregnancy and twelve months postpartum for both mother and child.

The Ministers' Conference of Baltimore & Vicinity is an organization comprised of more than 150 congregations whose focus is shifting more and more on caring for the "holistic" needs, in particular health care, for its members and the communities it serves. Our Civic Action Committee has an initiative, "And the Church Shall Lead", and one of its goals is to eradicate health disparities/inequalities. We support this bill because ongoing data suggest that access to effective prenatal and postpartum care reduces health complications/challenges, as well as potential deaths for the baby and the mother. This bill would expand the care and produce better outcomes for the people we serve.

We thank you in advance for your actions towards SB778.

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