

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

Maryland Chapter



TO: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Clarence K. Lam

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Richard A. Tabuteau

DATE: March 1, 2018

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 1038 – *Health Insurance – Health Benefit Plans – Special Enrollment Period for Pregnancy*

On behalf of the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) and the Maryland Section of the American Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology (MDACOG), we **support** House Bill 1038.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for women of reproductive age, lack of health insurance, either sustained or temporary, can be a barrier to receiving regular health care, including preventive services, or might limit opportunities to identify, manage, or treat health conditions that put women at risk for poor maternal and infant outcomes during pregnancy. Passage of House Bill 1038 provides a mechanism to significantly reduce the number of women who are unable to secure health care coverage if they are uninsured and become pregnant.

House Bill 1038 requires both small employer and individual health benefit plans to provide a special enrollment period for a woman who becomes pregnant. The special enrollment period enables a woman to enroll in a health benefit plan any time after commencement of the pregnancy and must remain open for the duration of the pregnancy.

Requiring a special enrollment period for pregnancy is a simple, straightforward, and effective means to ensure that health care coverage is available for pregnant women thereby reducing the risk for poor maternal and fetal outcomes during pregnancy. It also increases the likelihood of a positive birth outcome and a healthy newborn. MDAAP and MDACOG urge a favorable report on House Bill 1038.

For more information call:

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Richard A. Tabuteau
410-244-7000