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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 Adrienne A. Jones

FROM: Richard A. Tabuteau
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
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DATE: March 20, 2018

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 1685 – *Maryland Prenatal and Infant Care Coordination Services Grant Program Fund (Thrive by Three Fund)*

The Maryland State Medical Society, the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Maryland Section of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists submit this letter of **support** for House Bill 1685.

House Bill 1685 establishes the Maryland Prenatal and Infant Care Coordination Services Grant Program Fund to make grants to counties and municipalities to provide care coordination services and evidence-based supports or interventions to low-income pregnant and postpartum women and to children from birth to 3 years old. Grant funding is to be prioritized for proposals from a county or municipality that can demonstrate that the program will be coordinated with community-based providers and has a high number of births to women enrolled in Medicaid, high rates of infant mortality, and high rates of preterm births.

According to the January 2018 National Vital Statistics Report on Births issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, Medicaid was the source of payment for 42.6% of all 2016 births. Their study also revealed that both preterm birth rates and the rate of low birthweight increased from the year prior. Moreover, according to the Maryland Vital Statistics Administration, Maryland consistently has higher infant mortality rates than the broader national rate.

Though statistics mask the complicated nature and composition of any given population, Maryland can only benefit from establishing this Fund to address the needs of low-income pregnant and postpartum women and young children. We urge the committee to give House Bill 1685 a favorable report.

For more information call:

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