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American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

Maryland Chapter



TO: The Honorable Peter A. Hammen, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Anthony J. O'Donnell

FROM: Pam M. Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman

DATE: February 23, 2016

RE: **OPPOSE** – House Bill 827 – *Newborn Infant Screening – Testing by Nonpublic Laboratories – Authorization*

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) and the Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi) oppose House Bill 827.

House Bill 827 proposes to allow newborn screening to be referred to an outside laboratory instead of the State laboratory at the request of the parents. This bill will undermine the effectiveness of Maryland's newborn screening program which has been a model across the country for decades. Allowing parents to decide which laboratory will perform the required newborn screening will fragment this critical public health program and undermine the ability to efficiently and effectively screen for hereditary and congenital disorders.

Maryland's newborn screening program provides early identification and follow up for treatment of infants affected by genetic, metabolic, hormonal and functional conditions. The panel of screening tests included in Maryland's program reflects the tests recommended by the federal Secretary's Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children (SACHDNC) which form the basis of the federal Recommended Uniform Screening Panel (RUSP). Maryland relies on the RUSP to define its newborn screening panel to ensure that the tests are scientifically sound and treatment is available for the conditions. This is a critical factor as scientific advances may allow some conditions to be identified through testing before they meet the criteria for inclusion on the RUSP in large which also requires the availability of treatment. Generally it is not recommended that States include testing in their newborn screening program that has not yet been added to the RUSP. Fragmenting this highly effective

process through the diversion of screening panels to outside laboratories at the request of parents will undermine its effectiveness and eliminate the assurance that the newborn screening process is continuous and secure from screening, follow-up and diagnosis, to management, evaluation and education.

Maryland's newborn screening law does not prohibit parents from obtaining additional screening beyond the tests conducted by the State if they choose. If the objective of this legislation is to provide parents the ability to obtain a wider range of screening services, they can already do so by seeking supplemental testing. Passage of House Bill 827 will undermine one of Maryland's most successful public health programs. An unfavorable report is requested.

For more information call:

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