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.

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