



The Maryland State Medical Society

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TO: The Honorable Bobby A. Zirkin, Chair
Members, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
The Honorable Delores G. Kelley

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
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DATE: March 7, 2018

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 629 – *Correctional Facilities – Pregnant Inmates – Medical Care*

We submit this letter on behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi) and the Maryland Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (MDACOG), in **support** of Senate Bill 629.

Senate Bill 629 requires State and local correctional facilities to have a written policy in place regarding the medical care of pregnant inmates. The policy is to address the full range of services that may be required to appropriately manage a pregnancy and related health issues, including prenatal and postnatal care. The correctional facility must provide the required written policy to an inmate at the time of a positive pregnancy test result so that the inmate is aware of how her pregnancy will be managed and the services available. The bill also requires that the Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards review a correctional facility's policy during regular inspections.

While it is the understanding of the above-named organizations that many correctional facilities have such policies in place, there is not consistency in communication of those policies with pregnant inmates and many of the current policies do not include the full range of services required by Senate Bill 629. The information that is required to be included in a written policy should be provided to and understood by the pregnant woman. Pregnant inmates face a myriad of challenges not experienced by most pregnant women and do not have the ability to manage their own care. Understanding what services and resources are available and how those services will be provided is a critical component to increasing the likelihood of a positive outcome. Requiring a written policy will also help ensure that all correctional facilities have carefully considered and planned for how they will provide the full range of services that may be required by a pregnant inmate, another important component of enhancing positive outcomes. Passage of Senate Bill 629 is requested.

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