



Maryland
Hospital Association

February 15, 2023

To: The Honorable Senator Melony Griffith, Chair, Senate Finance Committee

Re: Letter of Concern - Senate Bill 410 - Public Health - Childbirth - Paternity Test

Dear Chair Griffith:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 410.

SB 410 requires an attending physician to provide an oral and written offer for a paternity test to the presumed father for a child born at a health care facility before a birth certificate form is completed for the child.

This legislation presents many concerns for the hospital field. Primarily, it is not the role of the attending physician to make a determination about the identity of the presumed father or to offer a paternity test. After a newborn is delivered, the clinical hospital care team are focused on the well-being of the birthing person and baby.

There is an extensive process outlined in statute for filing a birth certificate for an individual who is not married who gives birth to a child.^{1,2} Changes to this process that involve the attending physician, as required by SB 410, present concerns about the impact on the birthing person, newborn, hospital staff, other patients and visitors if there is a domestic disagreement regarding the paternity of the child.

For these reasons, MHA expresses deep concern with the concepts outlined in SB 410 and respectfully requests an *unfavorable* report.

For more information, please contact:
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¹ Department of Legislative Services. (2023). "[SB 410: Fiscal and Policy Note.](#)"

² [Md. Code, Health General 4-208](#)