



House Bill 796

Public Health – Maternal Mortality Review Program – Establishment of Local Teams

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

Date: February 27, 2019

To: Health and Government Operations
Committee

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS HB 796 WITH AMENDMENTS** to ensure it authorizes rather than requires counties to establish maternal mortality review teams.

HB 796 requires that each county establish a multidisciplinary and multiagency maternal mortality review team to help prevent and review important information on maternal deaths. As introduced, MACo has concerns that the bill will mandate counties to use limited public health resources without giving them flexibility to appropriately adopt such programs to target their local needs. To address this concern, MACo requests the bill be amended to authorize rather than require the establishment of maternal mortality review teams.

Counties that choose to establish a maternal mortality review team would be empowered to develop an understanding of maternal deaths on a county-specific level. They would be able to provide a community-based perspective to their state counterparts on the causes of maternal deaths and changes to law, policy, or practices that could prevent those deaths.

The efforts of these teams would complement the efforts of Maryland's Maternal Mortality Review Program which includes a group of experts that reviews maternal deaths on a statewide basis, along with the Maternal Mortality Stakeholder Group which is charged with identifying and examining disparities in maternal deaths and implementing recommendations to address those disparities.

HB 796 provides counties with a tool for addressing maternal mortality deaths. Authorizing rather than requiring counties to establish these teams would allow counties to use their limited resources as they best see fit for their communities. For these reasons MACo requests a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on HB 796.

AMENDMENTS

On page 2, in line 26, strike "SHALL" and insert "MAY".