



**CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT**

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Mary Beth Haller, Interim Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City Health Department
CC	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
DATE	May 12, 2025
SUBJECT	25-0016R – Informational Hearing – Black Maternal Health

Position: Favorable

BILL SYNOPSIS

This resolution calls for an informational hearing for various agencies to come before the City Council to discuss Black Maternal Health. The bill states that the Council wishes to understand how certain, specific focus areas "can best be implemented to improve Black maternal health outcomes, and what actions City agencies can take to further the goals of equity and justice in reproductive care." The bill states that the focus areas were identified by a Baltimore-based Black maternal health organization called "the Bloom Collective." They are as follows:

- Investment in community-based birthing centers and culturally-affirming maternal care
- Black-led community healing spaces, including peer support groups and trauma-informed therapy from providers with shared experience
- Increasing housing security by prioritizing pregnant and postpartum parents in housing assistance programs and improving eviction protections
- The mandating of gender and racial bias training, establishing community-led health advisory bodies, and requiring reporting of demographic disparities in maternal health outcomes by health care facilities
- Providing youth-focused reproductive education that does not oppress or pathologize sex and pregnancy, as well as increasing availability of contraception and reproductive health services

SUMMARY OF POSITION

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) welcomes the opportunity to present to members of the City Council about Black maternal health and strategies to improve maternal health in Baltimore City. BCHD's Bureau of Maternal and Child Health runs a slate of programs and services related to maternal health and reproductive health, including:

- Maternal Mortality Review Team
- Care coordination services

- Maternal and Infant Care Program (home visiting services)
- Family planning and reproductive health education and services, including youth-focused initiatives
- Women, Infants & Children (WIC)
- Community-based work on hypertension
- Extensive outreach to and collaboration with medical providers

These programs and services are all part of the nationally recognized B'more for Healthy Babies (BHB) initiative, a collaboration between BCHD, HealthCare Access Maryland, Family League of Baltimore City, and more than 100 other partners from the government, philanthropic, academic, and private sectors. This long-term, strategic initiative takes a strategic approach to improving maternal and infant health-outcomes in Baltimore City, with a focus on addressing racial disparities.

BCHD respectfully requests a favorable report and looks forward to presenting on this work at the hearing.