


Government of the District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Financial Officer



Jeffrey S. DeWitt
Chief Financial Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Jeffrey S. DeWitt
Chief Financial Officer 

DATE: January 28, 2020

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement – Better Access for Babies to Integrated
Equitable Services Act of 2020

REFERENCE: Bill 23-416, Draft Committee Print as provided to the Office of Revenue
Analysis on January 27, 2020

Conclusion

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2020 through fiscal year 2023 budget and financial plan to implement the bill.

Background

All District hospitals, birthing facilities, and nurse midwives facilitating home births must¹ screen newborn babies for hearing impairment, congenital heart disease, and metabolic disorders. The bill requires² each individual and group health benefit plan that is issued or renewed in the District of Columbia to provide coverage for these newborn screenings.

The bill establishes an annual birthing facility report card program to publicize information about quality of care. Each hospital and birthing facility in the District must report information to the Department of Health (DOH) to determine compliance with each element of the report card. The report cards must score each facility in the following areas:

¹ As required by the Community Health Omnibus Amendment Act of 2018, effective April 11, 2019 (D.C. Law 22-290; D.C. Official Code § 7-858.02).

² By amending The Community Health Omnibus Amendment Act of 2018, effective April 11, 2019 (D.C. Law 22-290; 66 DCR 1668).

The Honorable Phil Mendelson

FIS: Bill 23-416, "Better Access for Babies to Integrated Equitable Services Act of 2020," Draft Committee Print as provided to the Office of Revenue Analysis on January 27, 2020

- Newborn Screenings;
- Lactation Support Services;
- Education Requirements on newborn and postpartum health;
- Discharge Standard; and
- Clinical Quality Measures of obstetrical and neonatal care.

The bill establishes a Perinatal and Infant Health Advisory Committee (Committee) to make recommendations on improving perinatal health and assuring access to quality perinatal health services in the District. The Committee will be comprised of 11 voting members as follows:

- The Director of DOH;
- The Director of the Department of Health Care Finance;
- The State Superintendent of Education;
- Two consumers with children under the age of five;
- A medical doctor practicing as a pediatric primary care provider;
- A medical doctor practicing as a neonatologist;
- A medical doctor practicing as an obstetrician-gynecologist in an ambulatory setting;
- A medical doctor specialized in and practicing maternal-fetal medicine;
- A geneticist; and
- A certified lactation counselor.

The Committee is tasked with gathering and disseminating information about perinatal and infant health indicators to increase the public's understanding. The Committee will review newborn screening and surveillance data, including aggregate reports and individual case studies, and provide recommendations to improve the quality of newborn screening and birthing facility maternal and newborn discharge protocols. The Committee will also evaluate the effectiveness of newborn screenings, increase promotion and support of breastfeeding, and review perinatal and newborn health policies.

Financial Plan Impact

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2020 through fiscal year 2023 budget and financial plan to implement the bill. No additional resources are required to mandate individual and group health benefit plan coverage of newborn screenings. DOH can absorb any costs associated with implementing the birthing facility report card and Perinatal and Infant Health Advisory Committee.