

Steven Sepe

From: Robert S Smith MD <drsmith13@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:24 AM
To: House Health and Human Services Committee
Subject: HOUSE BILL 5613

I am a retired OB/Gyn physician, now living in E Providence. In view of the rapidly increasing rates of congenital syphilis across the country, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology has issued updated guidance for obstetrician–gynecologists----- recommending that they now screen pregnant individuals for syphilis three times during pregnancy:

According to the new ACOG Practice Advisory, "**obstetrician–gynecologists and other obstetric care professionals should screen all pregnant individuals serologically for syphilis at the first prenatal care visit, followed by universal rescreening during the third trimester and again at birth.**" This is a change from previous guidance, which recommended risk-based testing in the third trimester only for individuals living in communities with high rates of syphilis and for those who have been at risk of syphilis acquisition during pregnancy.

A missed diagnosis of syphilis in a pregnant woman will invariably result in a long term **severely damaged baby or an intrauterine death.** The fines that you propose in this bill, between \$10 and \$100, in my opinion are way insufficient. I would suggest \$250 to \$1000. These larger amounts will resonate with caregivers, causing them to likely ensure that their patients have the initial blood test asap!!

Robert S Smith, MD.