



April 14, 2026

The Honorable Josue Ortega
411 Legislative Ave
Dover, DE 19901

RE: DHA Support for Folic Acid Fortification (HB 337)

Dear Representative Ortega,

The Delaware Healthcare Association, on behalf of Delaware's hospitals, health systems, and related healthcare organizations, is pleased to support House Bill 337. This legislation would require a specified amount of folic acid to be added to corn masa flour and corn masa products to reduce the risk of neural tube defects (NTDs).

Minority communities in the United States face a disproportionately higher risk of NTDs, which are serious birth defects that occur during early pregnancy. NTDs include spina bifida, a condition characterized by an opening along the spine that can lead to varying degrees of nerve damage and disability. Research has demonstrated that a daily intake of folic acid can reduce the risk of NTDs by more than 50 percent. In response to this evidence, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration mandated folic acid fortification in enriched cereal grain products in 1998, leading to an estimated 35 percent reduction in NTD cases nationwide. However, this requirement did not extend to corn masa flour, which remains a dietary staple in many minority communities. HB 337 takes steps to address this.

Advancing health equity is a top priority for DHA in 2026. House Bill 337 will help ensure that all communities—particularly those at higher risk—have access to essential nutrients that support healthier pregnancies and improved birth outcomes for Delawareans.

Thank you for the opportunity to share DHA's support for HB 337 and for your leadership and collaboration on this important issue. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues in the General Assembly to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Christina Bryan'.

Christina Bryan
Vice President of External Affairs

Brian Frazee
President & CEO

ChristianaCare
Janice E. Nevin, MD, MPH
President & CEO
DHA Board Chair

Bayhealth
Terry Murphy
President & CEO
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