

HOUSE BILL 274

J3, J1

3lr2363
CF SB 387

By: Delegates Bhandari, Forbes, A. Johnson, S. Johnson, ~~and Kaiser~~ Kaiser, Pena-Melnyk, Cullison, Rosenberg, Alston, Bagnall, Martinez, Woods, R. Lewis, M. Morgan, Chisholm, Guzzone, Szeliga, Reilly, Hutchinson, Hill, White, Kerr, Kipke, Lopez, and Taveras

Introduced and read first time: January 25, 2023

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 7, 2023

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force on Reducing Emergency Department Wait Times**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force on Reducing Emergency Department Wait
4 Times to study ~~best practices~~ and make recommendations for reducing emergency
5 department wait times; and generally relating to the Task Force on Reducing
6 Emergency Department Wait Times.

7 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
8 That:

9 (a) There is a Task Force on Reducing Emergency Department Wait Times.

10 (b) The Task Force consists of the following members:

11 (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of
12 the Senate;

13 (2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the
14 House;

15 (3) the Secretary of Health, or the Secretary's designee; ~~and~~

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (4) the Executive Director of the Maryland Institute for Emergency
2 Medical Services Systems, or the Executive Director's designee;

3 (5) the Executive Director of the Health Services Cost Review Commission,
4 or the Executive Director's designee;

5 (6) the Executive Director of the Maryland Health Care Commission, or the
6 Executive Director's designee; and

7 ~~(4)~~ (7) the following ~~four~~ members, appointed by the Governor:

8 (i) ~~one representative from the Maryland Hospital Association;~~

9 ~~(ii)~~ two representatives of patient advocacy organizations; ~~and~~

10 ~~(iii) one individual who is employed as medical staff in an emergency~~
11 ~~department~~

12 (ii) two representatives of hospitals, one of whom represents a
13 hospital in a rural setting;

14 (iii) one representative of a hospital with a pediatric emergency
15 department;

16 (iv) one representative from a specialty psychiatric provider that
17 provides both inpatient and outpatient services;

18 (v) four representatives who are emergency department personnel,
19 including:

20 1. two licensed physicians;

21 2. one licensed nurse; and

22 3. one individual who provides direct care to pediatric
23 patients in a specialized pediatric emergency department;

24 (vi) one provider of behavioral health services;

25 (vii) one high volume emergency medical services provider;

26 (viii) one representative of the nursing home industry;

27 (ix) one registered nurse employed in an emergency department who
28 is a member of an employee organization that is an exclusive bargaining representative for
29 health care workers; and

1 (x) one service employee employed in an emergency department who
2 interacts with patients and is a member of an employee organization that is an exclusive
3 bargaining representative for health care workers.

4 (c) The Governor shall designate the chair of the Task Force.

5 (d) The ~~Maryland Department of Health~~ Maryland Institute for Emergency
6 Medical Services Systems shall provide staff for the Task Force.

7 (e) A member of the Task Force:

8 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but

9 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State
10 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

11 (f) The Task Force shall:

12 (1) ~~identify potential solutions to reduce excessive~~ root causes of wait times
13 in emergency departments in the State, including:

14 (i) an analysis of health system capacity, including:

15 1. inpatient hospital;

16 2. urgent care;

17 3. inpatient and community behavioral health;

18 4. primary care; and

19 5. other health facility or community capacity considered
20 necessary by the Task Force;

21 (ii) an analysis of health care workforce supply and unmet need;

22 (iii) an analysis of changes in acuity over time in hospitalizations and
23 emergency department visits; and

24 (iv) the availability of post-hospitalization care options and barriers
25 to accessing those care options;

26 (2) ~~study best practices for emergency department staffing, triage, and the~~
27 regulatory environment, access and availability of health care services, and inpatient bed
28 availability in states that:

29 (i) have a population similar to Maryland;

1 (ii) are similar in hospital density and care pattern utilization;

2 (iii) have at least one city of approximately 500,000 residents; and

3 ~~(iii)~~ (iv) rank within the top 50% of states in shortest emergency
4 room wait time; ~~and~~

5 (3) coordinate with other State commissions examining issues related to
6 workforce shortage and behavioral health capacity;

7 (4) review studies and recommendations on addressing workforce capacity
8 issues;

9 (5) conduct an analysis of reimbursement policies and the effect of those
10 policies on hospital reimbursement; and

11 ~~(3)~~ (6) make recommendations, including legislative, regulatory, or other
12 policy initiatives, regarding best practices for reducing emergency department wait times
13 that should be implemented in the State.

14 (g) On or before January 1, 2024, the Task Force shall report its findings and
15 recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State
16 Government Article, the General Assembly.

17 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
18 1, 2023. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 1 month and, at the end of June
19 30, 2024, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be
20 abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.