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Legislative District 41
Baltimore City

Health and Government Operations
Committee

Chair
Government Operations and
Health Facilities Subcommittee

House Chair
Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review



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Testimony of Delegate Samuel I. Rosenberg

Before the House Appropriations Committee

In Support of House Bill 1087

Opioid Restitution Fund – State - Subdivision and Grant Program

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

After decades of impunity, opioid manufacturers have recently been held financially accountable for the devastation that their drugs inflicted on individuals and communities across the country. These funds will not bring back those lost to opioid-related causes, but this money can help those who are still struggling with addiction, their families, and the communities that shoulder a disproportionately heavy burden from opioid addiction.

Recently, several major distributors and a manufacturer of opioids have settled with almost all 50 states. The total settlement was for \$26 billion, of which Maryland could receive about \$492 million. Maryland's share is disproportionately higher than its population, because of the high incidence of opioid addiction in Maryland. Eighty-five percent of this money must be spent on a variety of authorized opioid-abatement programs that are evidence-based or evidence-informed.

The amount Maryland receives from this settlement is contingent upon all Maryland jurisdictions signing on to the agreement. House Bill 1087 would mandate that all jurisdictions sign on to the proposed agreement so that Maryland can get the highest amount of funding possible.

Ideally, all jurisdictions would voluntarily sign on to the agreement, and Maryland would be able to receive the full \$492 million without the need for this legislation. If that is not the case, this bill would mandate the jurisdictions sign on so that Maryland can claim the maximum amount of funds to help remediate the damage from opioids.

I urge a favorable report on House Bill 1087.

March 1, 2022