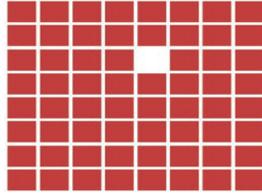


1211 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-5585
410-727-2237
e-mail: mdacep@aol.com
www.mdacep.org



Maryland Chapter AMERICAN COLLEGE OF EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS

TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Jason Gallion

FROM: Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise

DATE: February 8, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 295 – *Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Emergency Service Transporters – Reimbursement*

The Maryland Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians (MDACEP) which represents the interests of emergency physicians and their patients throughout the State of Maryland **supports** Senate Bill 295. Senate Bill 295 requires reimbursement for medical services provided to a Medicaid recipient in response to a 9-1-1 call in situations when the recipient is not transported to a facility. Also, beginning in fiscal 2023, the Maryland Department of Health must increase the amount of reimbursement for transportation and medical services by \$25 each fiscal year until the reimbursement rate is at least \$300.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Maryland emergency departments saw an increase in Marylanders using the emergency departments for non-emergency situations. Often, this is the result of individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis or simply because they did not have a primary care provider. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated both situations. Many of these patients could be safely treated by EMS providers but, because the patient refuses transport, the EMS provider is not paid for their services and there is a disincentive not to transport. When this occurs, there becomes the concern that, due to emergency department overcrowding, those experiencing life-threatening emergencies (e.g., heart attack, stroke, etc.) may be delayed care.

MDACEP believes that it is in the public interest to reimburse EMS providers when care is provided at the scene. It is important to note that the fiscal note, while showing the cost for reimbursing EMS providers, does not offset this with the costs saved for not transporting to emergency departments. Regarding the required increase of \$25 to bring the reimbursement rate to \$100, MDACEP believes that this timeframe should be accelerated. EMS providers are a critical component in emergency care. Reimbursing at only \$100 does not cover costs and places many EMS companies in financial hardship.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report.

For more information call:

Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
410-244-7000