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Judiciary Committee
Subcommittee
Civil Law and Procedure

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 7, 2023

FAVORABLE: HB1217-Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance – Required 3 Coverage for Biomarker Testing

TO: Chair Pena- Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee

House Bill 1217 requires the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and certain insurers, nonprofit health service plans, health maintenance organizations, and managed care organizations to provide coverage for biomarker testing that is supported by medical and scientific evidence; establishing requirements for deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, and utilization review for biomarker testing; and generally relating to the coverage of biomarker testing by the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and health insurance carriers.

HB1217 is an important piece of legislation that is critical for ensuring that detection of cancers can be found more expeditiously, particularly in Black women and men. Despite evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of biomarker testing and targeted therapy, currently not all individuals benefit equitably from these advances. There are notable racial/ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities in access and utilization of these advancements in care. These disparities in access and use of guideline-indicated biomarker testing and targeted therapy can potentially widen existing disparities in patient survival. The national Black Caucus of State

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Legislators adopted resolutions recognizing the importance of biomarker testing in advancing health equity and reducing disparities.

Four states have already enacted this law: Arizona, Illinois, Louisiana, and Rhode Island. If we are serious about saving lives, especially Black lives that have been impacted by Cancer more than any other race, I respectfully ask that Maryland join the aforementioned States by passing HB1217.

Esteemed Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee, I ask for a favorable report on HB1217.

Thank you,

Delegate Karen R. Toles