



**Subject: Physician support for HB1217/SB805 – Required Coverage for Biomarker Testing**

**Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance: Required Coverage for Biomarker Testing  
House Bill 1217 / Senate Bill 805**

I am seeking your support for this important legislation to ensure and expand patient access to biomarker testing in Maryland. This bill offers you the opportunity to help improve quality of life for thousands of our citizens battling cancer and other chronic conditions.

Biomarkers are molecules found in the blood or tissues that are an indicator of a normal or abnormal process in the body. Biomarker testing aids physicians in making diagnoses at an early stage and provides valuable information on disease prognosis. These tests also detect the ‘genomic signature’ of the cancer, so a personalized treatment plan is established. This personalized medicine approach allows us to treat cancers more effectively with fewer side effects, adverse events and drug failures than traditional chemotherapy. In short, biomarker testing is life-changing and in some cases lifesaving. As a Board-certified dermatologist, I’ve found biomarker testing to be essential to my evaluation of skin lesions, greatly aiding in the early detection of malignant melanoma and defining the prognosis of the cancer once it has been detected.

Unfortunately, insurance coverage has not kept pace with the speed of medical innovation, creating significant barriers to care for vulnerable patients. This bill will increase access to this lifesaving diagnostic tool by ensuring state-regulated health insurance, including Medicaid, will cover this critically important testing. It’s time for Maryland to join Arizona, California, Illinois, Louisiana and Rhode Island who have already passed laws to increase access to comprehensive biomarker testing. At this moment, legislation is moving forward in Kentucky and Oklahoma.

Expanding access to biomarker testing will ensure our citizens get the earliest diagnosis and the right treatment at the right time. Ultimately, this will create significant savings to the health care system, will reduce the burden of disease and will save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawrence J. Green".

Lawrence J. Green, MD FAAD

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