



Statement of Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA)

To the House Health and Government Operation Committee

Chair: Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk

February 17, 2023

House Bill 274: Task Force on Reducing Emergency Department Wait Times

POSITION: SUPPORT w/Amendments

Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Kelly, and members of the Committee, the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) is in SUPPORT of House Bill 274: Task Force on Reducing Emergency Department Wait Times.

Emergency Department wait times significantly impact patient satisfaction and have been an increasing issue over time. Longer wait times are negatively associated with clinical provider scores of patient satisfaction; results indicated that every aspect of patient experience- specifically confidence in the care provider and perceived quality of care- correlates negatively with longer wait for times¹. MRHA fully supports the establishment of a Task Force to address these challenges and encourages the following amendment to include expansion of the Task Force to include a representative designated from a rural hospital or organization that services a rural community in Maryland from one of the 18 designated rural counties.

Sincerely,

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¹ Bleustein, C., Rothschild, D. B., Valen, A., Valatis, E., Schweitzer, L., & Jones, R. (2014). Wait times, patient satisfaction scores, and the perception of care. *The American journal of managed care*, 20(5), 393–400.