

**2024 SESSION**  
**POSITION PAPER**

**BILL NO:** HB 1439

**COMMITTEE:** House Appropriations Committee

**POSITION:** Support

**TITLE:** Public Health - Funding for Trauma Centers and Services

**BILL ANALYSIS:**

The bill alters the purpose, contents, and sources of the funding of the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund by altering the entities to which money from the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund is transferred. It also changes the methodology used to determine eligibility for disbursements from the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund. The bill alters the amount of the motor vehicle registration surcharge and the amount of the surcharge that is required to be paid into the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund. It increases the fines for certain violations of the Maryland Vehicle Law related to driving while impaired and alters the authorized uses of the Maryland Emergency Medical System Operations Fund.

**POSITION AND RATIONALE**

The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) supports HB 1439.

HB 1439 increases the amount from the motor vehicle registration surcharge paid into the Maryland Trauma Physicians Services Fund (Trauma Fund) and as well as to the Maryland Emergency Medical Systems Operations Fund. The MHCC, in conjunction with the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC), is responsible for the oversight and administration of the Trauma Fund.

HB 1439 expands physician on-call payments to trauma center hospitals by providing greater flexibility to MHCC and the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) in modifying payment parameters. The bill also expands the ability of MHCC and HSCRC, in collaboration with the Maryland Institute of Emergency Medical Services Systems to award grants to trauma centers for equipment and potentially other trauma-related costs. It also authorizes non-physicians' health care practitioners to receive uncompensated

care payments. The Trauma Fund is a non-lapsing fund financed through motor vehicle registrations and registration renewals. To accommodate additional funding needs, HB 1439 increases the assessment from the Trauma Fund from \$2.50 to \$10.00 per year.

This legislation reflects the recommendations of the Commission to Study Trauma Funding (Trauma Commission), which was established during the 2023 legislative session. The Trauma Commission, which included multiple trauma centers, State Legislators, and state agencies, met five times from August to December 2023. The Trauma Commission issued a report in February containing 16 recommendations, ten of which require legislative action. HB 1439 conforms to the recommendations in the Commission to Study [Trauma Funding Report](#).

The MHCC is committed to collaborate with our sister agencies, trauma centers and trauma providers to develop the modifications in COMAR 10.25.10 Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund needed to implement HB 1439 should the General Assembly pass and the Governor sign this needed legislation.

For the stated reasons above, we ask for a favorable report on HB 1439.