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BILL NO.: **HB 686**

TITLE: Youth Sports Programs – Venue-Specific Emergency Action Plans – Requirements

SPONSOR: Delegate Simmons

COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations

POSITION: **OPPOSES**

DATE: February 21, 2024

Baltimore County **OPPOSES** House Bill 686 – Youth Sports Programs – Venue-Specific Emergency Action Plans – Requirements, which requires a large number of protocols that must be in place at each facility that a “Youth Sports Program” utilizes.

HB 686 would technically make most of its requirements the responsibility of the “Youth Sports Program,” which is defined in existing law as “a program organized for recreational athletic competition or instruction for participants who are under the age of 19 years.” Since the vast majority of Baltimore County youth sports programs are presently run by recreation councils, this would place an enormous level of responsibility on these volunteer-based groups. And since there are hundreds of these programs, it would be very difficult to ensure compliance and consistency among programs.

HB 686 would moreover require the installation of an AED unit at every facility at which a game or practice may occur. However, the bill does not define “facility.” “Facility” could be taken to mean the venue as a whole, or it could be taken to mean each facility or amenity at the venue that serves a youth sports program. For example, a site with indoor and outdoor recreational facilities may need an AED at its gymnasium, each activity room, at each baseball diamond, and at each of its sport courts. There are over 240 public parks, leased recreation sites, and school recreation centers that include fields, courts, or indoor recreation facilities. Each could have numerous facilities that serve youth sports programs. It would require significant fiscal investment both at the onset for installing the AEDs, and then on an ongoing basis for regular maintenance, replacement costs, and even extending electrical service to power the devices. This legislation additionally does not offer a funding source for possibly over 1,000 AEDs, placing a large burden on Baltimore County.

Accordingly, Baltimore County urges an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB 686 from the House Health and Government Operations committee. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov.