



Maryland Community Health System

Bill Number: House Bill 43 – Federally Qualified Health Centers Grant Program - Acquisition of Land

Committee: House Appropriations Committee

Hearing Date: January 28, 2025

Position: Support

The Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *House Bill 43 - Federally Qualified Health Centers Grant Program - Acquisition of Land*. The bill would allow the Federally Qualified Health Centers Capital Grant Program to make grants to counties, municipal corporations, and nonprofit corporations for the acquisition of land for the construction or use of a federally qualified health center.

The Maryland Community Health System is a network of federally qualified health centers (FQHC) located across Maryland. FQHCs are vital for communities lacking access to healthcare. They offer primary care, dental services, and mental health counseling. These centers focus on low-income and marginalized populations, ensuring equitable access to health services. In Maryland, FQHCs improve lives through comprehensive care and preventive services. Currently, the FQHC Grant Program which is under the Department of Health, only provides capital grants to assist in the conversion, acquisition, design, construction, renovation, and equipping of Federally Qualified Health Center facilities.

The bill would provide more flexibility in the FQHC Grant Program. The Maryland Department of Health could consider funding land acquisition if in the best interests of the community. The additional flexibility is particularly important in rural communities where there may be fewer options for existing buildings. An FQHC might have to purchase land to build a new clinic site.

We request a favorable report on House Bill 43. If we can provide any further information, please contact Michael Paddy at mpaddy@policypartners.net.