



House Bill 43

Federally Qualified Health Centers Grant Program - Acquisition of Land

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Appropriations Committee

Date: January 28, 2025

From: Karrington Anderson

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 43. This bill strengthens the Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) Grant Program by authorizing the Board of Public Works to provide grants to counties, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations for the acquisition of land for the construction or use of FQHCs.

FQHCs play a critical role in Maryland's healthcare system, delivering comprehensive primary care services to underserved communities, regardless of the residents' ability to pay. By addressing access barriers, these centers provide a lifeline for residents in areas with limited healthcare options and ensure that essential medical care is available to all Marylanders.

HB 43 may make the difference in turning otherwise untenable projects into a supportable reality. This bill expands the scope of the grant program to include funding for land acquisition, an essential step in developing and expanding FQHCs. This added flexibility will benefit counties that partner closely with FQHCs to meet local healthcare needs by allowing them to address critical infrastructure needs and support new projects to better serve their residents.

MACo appreciates that this legislation reflects a collaborative approach to strengthening public health infrastructure, benefiting counties and communities statewide. By ensuring that the necessary resources are available for FQHC development, HB 43 will advance Maryland's commitment to equitable and accessible healthcare.

For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 43.