

MARYLAND STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HEALTH AND WELLNESS

January 24, 2025

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The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: Senate Bill 94– Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Self-Measured Blood Pressure Monitoring– Letter of Support

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee members:

The Maryland State Advisory Council on Health and Wellness (the Council) is submitting this letter of support for **Senate Bill (SB) 94- Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Self-Measured Blood Pressure Monitoring**. SB 94 would require the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to provide coverage for blood pressure self-monitoring devices to certain patients and requires the program to develop and implement an educational campaign relating to self-measuring blood pressure.

The Council supports SB94 because of the council's ongoing work to promote evidence-based programs which encourage healthy lifestyles and aid in the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. SB 94 will enhance access to blood-pressure monitoring devices for low to moderate income households in our state. Self-measured BP monitoring has high potential for improving the diagnosis and management of hypertension and reducing cardiovascular disease outcomes and death¹. Late diagnosis and negative long term health outcomes for conditions such as diabetes^{2,3}, hypertension, and heart disease^{4,5} are frequently found in the low- and moderate-income communities due to stress, limited health literacy, and limited access to healthcare. SB 94 addresses these concerns for the low- and moderate-income community by eliminating the costs of obtaining and learning how to use self-measured blood pressure devices for the patients who need them.

For this reason, the Council respectfully requests a favorable report for SB94.

Sincerely,

Teresa Titus-Howard

Teresa Titus-Howard, PhD, MHA, MSW, CCM
Chair, State Advisory Council on Health and Wellness

¹ Shimbo D, Artinian NT, Basile JN, et al; American Heart Association and the American Medical Association. Self-measured blood pressure monitoring at home: a joint policy statement from the American Heart Association and American Medical Association. *Circulation*. 2020;142(4):e42-e63. [doi:10.1161/CIR.0000000000000803](https://doi.org/10.1161/CIR.0000000000000803)

² Gaskin, D. J., Thorpe, R. J., Jr, McGinty, E. E., Bower, K., Rohde, C., Young, J. H., LaVeist, T. A., & Dubay, L. (2014). Disparities in diabetes: the nexus of race, poverty, and place. *American journal of public health*, 104(11), 2147–2155. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2013.301420>

³ Mendenhall, E., Kohrt, B. A., Norris, S. A., Ndeti, D., & Prabhakaran, D. (2017). Non-communicable disease syndemics: poverty, depression, and diabetes among low-income populations. *Lancet (London, England)*, 389(10072), 951–963. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(17\)30402-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)30402-6)

⁴ Lee, G., & Carrington, M. (2007). Tackling heart disease and poverty. *Nursing & health sciences*, 9(4), 290–294. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1442-2018.2007.00363.x>

⁵ Sells, M. L., Blum, E., Perry, G. S., Eke, P., & Presley-Cantrell, L. (2023). Excess Burden of Poverty and Hypertension, by Race and Ethnicity, on the Prevalence of Cardiovascular Disease. *Preventing chronic disease*, 20, E109. <https://doi.org/10.5888/pcd20.230065>