

To: The Honorable Pam Beidle, Chair
Senate Finance Committee

From: Mary Miller, FACHE
CFO, Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital

Date: March 26, 2025

Re: HB1301: Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Program, and Health Insurance – Transfers to Special Pediatric Hospitals – Prior Authorizations

My name is Mary Miller, and I am the CFO at Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital, requesting a **FAVORABLE** report on House Bill 1301: Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Program, and Health Insurance – Transfers to Special Pediatric Hospitals – Prior Authorizations

This bill will help address barriers to getting children into our hospital, and about how reducing these barriers can be a part of the state's efforts to address pediatric overstay. It does this by prohibiting the use of prior authorization for transfers into Mt. Washington.

These delays happen because we are waiting for insurance companies to issue a prior authorization. Without this authorization, we risk receiving no payment – zero – for the entire inpatient stay.

We have met with the MCO and Commercial payers to ask them to voluntarily end the requirement for prior authorization. Four of the nine MCO's have done so; none of the commercial payers have. During Covid all MCO prior authorization requirements were waived. Every single one of the admissions without prior authorization were later confirmed to be appropriate. Not a single one was later denied. The system can work.

We know that acute care hospitals struggle with pediatric overstay. Some unnecessary overstay can be reduced if patients can move from acute care to our pediatric specialty care without delays caused by unneeded insurance company paperwork.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and for your support of this vulnerable population of Maryland's children. We respectfully request a favorable report on this bill.