



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

March 19, 2025

Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill: SB 594 - Public Health - Use of Opioid Restitution Fund and Training Under the Overdose Response Program

Position: Favorable

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) supports Senate Bill 594 as amended. The bill, as amended, strikes specific eligible uses of opioid settlement dollars from Maryland's opioid restitution fund (ORF). This provides the State and local governments additional flexibility as the eligible uses under the recent settlements have been broader in scope than those listed in the Maryland statute.

The ORF was originally established as a mechanism to receive disbursements from pending national settlements involving various actors in the production, distribution, and sale of opioid medication. It was created before the first opioid settlement agreement was finalized and allowed Maryland to be prepared to receive funds from the first, and future, settlements. However, along with the creation of the ORF, the State established eligible uses, as guardrails, for how money from the ORF could be spent by the State and other entities receiving ORF payments.

As the settlements have been completed, they too attached eligible uses to the funds disbursed by the national settlement administrator to the States. Now there are two sets of eligible uses that are not exactly aligned. In fact, the eligible uses in the settlements are now less restrictive than those in the State statute. SB 594 as amended removes the contradictory eligible uses and allows the ORF funds to be spent in a manner consistent with the terms of the settlements. This in turn provides the State and local governments with more flexibility to spend these settlement funds.

For these reasons, the Maryland Municipal League respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 594 as amended. For more information, please contact Bill Jorch, Director, Public Policy and Research at billj@mdmunicipal.org. Thank you for your consideration.