

To: Chair Ben Barnes and Members of the House Appropriations Committee

From: Kristin J. Bryce
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Re: House Bill 1540 – University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center –
Funding – Repeal of Termination Date

The University of Maryland Capital Regional Health and the University of Maryland Medical System submit this letter in strong support for House Bill 1540 – University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center – Funding – Repeal of Termination Date. House Bill 1540 (“HB 1540”) will extend the \$10 million operating grant for the University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center, which is currently scheduled to sunset after FY 2028, and enable UM Capital Region Medical Center to continue to deliver critical and complex health care to Prince Georgians and residents of the Southern Maryland region.

Background

On September 1, 2017, the last County-owned hospital care delivery system in the State merged into the University of Maryland Medical System (“UMMS”) and became University of Maryland Capital Region Health (“UM Capital Region”). This marked a major milestone in a historic public-private partnership among the State, Prince George’s County, and UMMS to make significant investment in the health and wellbeing of a County of nearly one million residents.

Historically, residents of Prince George’s County lacked access to critical health care services and experienced significant health disparities in comparison to surrounding counties and the State. Over 60 percent of County residents who required hospitalization received that care outside of Prince George’s, and the County had a resident to physician ratio that was double the State average. Prince Georgians also suffered from higher rates of chronic disease and higher rates of death from heart disease and cancer than residents of neighboring jurisdictions. Similarly, African American residents within the County suffered from higher rates of chronic disease and death than that of other minority and white residents.

As part of the public-private partnership, and in order to address the significant health disparities present in the County, the General Assembly established an operating grant for UM Capital Region to (1) increase critical health care services for Prince George’s County and the Southern Maryland Region, and (2) prevent additional operating losses for UM Capital Region Medical Center. The operating grant was initially authorized for 10 years, and is currently set to expire in

FY2028. HB 1540 would remove the sunset provision for the operating grant and enable UM Capital Region to continue to deliver critical, complex care and grow access to primary care in the County.

Clinical Investments

Since 2017, the State operating grant has helped enable UM Cap Region to establish and expand clinical programs in cancer care, neuroscience, cardiac care, orthopedics, urogynecology and other specialty areas, addressing long-standing access to care issues. These programs are focused on keeping care close to home, improving health outcomes, and meeting the most pressing needs of the community. Clinical investments stemming from the State operating grant include:

- **Cardiac Care.** UM Capital Region offers comprehensive heart care services for the community, including life-saving emergency treatment, advanced procedures, and ongoing heart health management. These services help patients receive timely, high-quality cardiac care without leaving the County. Since 2017, the total number of open-heart surgeries performed each year has grown from 30 to 180. In 2025, UM Capital Region was recognized by US News & World Report as a “high performing” hospital for heart attack and heart failure.
- **Cancer Care.** Cancer services are together under one coordinated program at the Largo campus, which reduces the need for patients to travel between multiple locations. For the most common cancers in the county – such as breast, lung, colorectal, and thoracic – Prince Georgians can access chemotherapy, radiation, and surgical care in one location close to home.
- **Primary Care.** Primary care is often the first point of contact for patients and a critical gateway to preventive care and chronic disease management. In 2025, primary care practices supported more than 18,500 patient visits, helping residents stay healthier and connected to care.
- **Brain and Stroke Care.** UM Capital Region has significantly expanded stroke and neurological services, allowing patients to receive specialized care quickly when every minute matters. These investments also support treatment for other brain and spine conditions, helping patients recover and maintain quality of life. The stroke program was recently ranked #1 in the State by Healthgrades, and among the top 10 percent of all hospitals nationwide.
- **Vascular Care.** Expanded vascular services provide increased screening and advanced treatment options for patients with complex vascular conditions, improving early detection and outcomes.
- **Maternal and High-Risk Pregnancy Care.** The medical center has expanded maternal fetal medicine (MFM) services and providers in Prince George’s County. Since opening the Largo campus, the number of babies born at UM Capital Region has more than doubled (from ~1,200 to more than 2,400 per year). A hospital the size of the UM Capital Region in Largo (228 acute care beds) would typically provide only basic OB/GYN services and transfer or refer specialty and higher-risk services, however, the medical center has been able to maintain and expand maternal fetal medicine services. Service efforts are focused on reducing fetal mortality rates and supports the only level III neonatal intensive care unit in the County.
- **Emergency Orthopedic Care.** As part of the Level II Trauma program, UM Capital Region provides emergency orthopedic care for patients with serious injuries. The

medical center supports a dedicated orthopedic team to ensure timely, high-quality care for trauma patients.

- **Women’s Health (Urogynecology).** By investing in specialized OB/GYN care, UM Capital Region allows women to receive advanced urogynecological health services locally rather than being referred elsewhere. This has resulted in more than 2,300 patient visits in the past year, keeping care accessible within the community.
- **MommaBaby Bus.** UM Capita Region supports a mobile MommaBaby Bus that brings prenatal screenings, education, and referrals directly into neighborhoods inside the Route 495 beltway. This program helps reach mothers who may otherwise delay care, improving outcomes for both mothers and babies.
- **Robotic Surgery.** Investments in robotic surgery technology allow patients to benefit from less invasive procedures, reduced blood loss, faster recovery, and a quicker return to daily activities—often with shorter hospital stays.

These programs have helped establish UM Cap Region as a market leader in specialty care for Prince George’s County residents. UM Capital Region is now recognized as a national healthcare leader, and is the recipient of the following awards and designations:

- Rated as “high performing” by U.S. News & World Report in five areas: diabetes, heart attack, hip fracture, heart failure, and stroke.
- Consistently ranked in the top 10 percent of hospitals nationwide for excellence in cardiac surgery by the Society of Thoracic Surgeons.
- Accredited in Vascular Testing by the Intersocietal Accreditation Commission.
- Received “Full Plus Recognition” from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prevent or delay type-2 diabetes, a designation reserved for programs delivering high-quality, evidence-based support.
- The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses Silver Beacon Award for Excellence in clinical care in the NICU.
- Received American Heart Association’s highest honor for commitment to quality stroke care.
- Center of Distinction for Wound Care Center seven years straight. Has a 94 percent healing rate.

UM Capital Region’s “First and Only’s”

For many complex areas or care, UM Capital Region is the first provider in the County to offer these services, the only provider in the county to provide these services, or both. The list of services for which UM Capital Region is the “first and only” in the County includes:

- Only Trauma Center – Level II (even with many Level I registrations)
- Only Adult Sickle Cell Clinic and Infusion Center
- Only Cardiac Surgery Program
- Only Electrophysiology Lab
- Only Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)
- Only Comprehensive Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Center (and Only Hospital-Based Rape Crisis Center in the State)
- Only Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program
- Only Family Medicine Residency Program

- Only Hospital-Based Maternal and Fetal Medicine Program
- Only Mama Baby Bus Program, focused on “inside the beltway”

Why is the grant still needed?

UM Capital Region is delivering on its charge to address health inequity in Prince George’s County and the health disparities that inequity has created. Though financial challenges continue. Despite exceeding the originally envisioned goal for performance improvement, **UM Capital Region/UMMS has incurred \$200 million in financial losses since 2017**. Under a global budget model, hospitals are disincentivized to increase the number of patients they serve or volume of care they provide; however, in a jurisdiction that has been underserved for decades, such as Prince George’s County, significant increases in volume are not only expected, but a strong indicator that historic trends are reversing and Prince Georgians are more commonly staying within the County to receive hospital care.

For all of these reasons, the State operating grant remains essential to fulfilling the mission of transforming health care in Prince George’s County. The health system that grew out of the historic partnership between the State, County and UMMS more than a decade ago has made unprecedented progress toward realizing the vision of more equitable and accessible high quality health care in Prince George’s County. The State operating grant is critical to the collective efforts to continue this progress, and continue providing higher complexity of care in Prince George’s County.

For these reasons, the UM Capital Regional Health and UMMS support HB 1540, and respectfully request a *favorable* report on the bill.

For more information, please contact:
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