

Maryland Department of Health Rare Disease Advisory Council

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D., Secretary

Current Members

January 23, 2026

Re: House Bill 60
Support, with amendments

Chair: Ada Hamosh,
MD, MPH

Felicia Brannon, MPA

Celinda Carr, LCSW-C,
CCM

Elisdel Garcia-
Bousquet, MD

Peter Hill, MD

Philip Iffland, PhD

Senator Clarence Lam,
MD

David Mann, MD, PhD

Matthew Meehan

Kristopher Rusinko,
PharmD, PhD, MBA,
M.Ed., MS

Jamie Sexton, JD

Lauren Shillinger

Constance Smith-Hicks,
MD, PhD

Jeneva Stone, PhD, MFA

Delegate Jamila Woods

The Honorable Ben Barnes, Chair
The Honorable Anne Kaiser, Vice Chair
Maryland House of Delegates
Appropriations Committee
120 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Barnes and members of the Appropriations Committee,

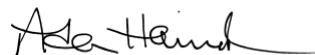
I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Rare Disease Advisory Council (RDAC) in support, with amendments, of House Bill 60. The RDAC is a legislated Governor's Advisory Council tasked with improving access to care and outcomes for people in Maryland living with Rare Disease. Sickle Cell Disease is a relatively common rare disease in Maryland. It, like many others, waxes and wanes with periods of good health and periods of severe pain and/or chest syndrome and an increased risk of strokes.

We support all provisions of this legislation but recommend its extension beyond sickle cell disease, and even rare disease, to chronic health conditions. Individuals with asthma or diabetes may also suffer hospitalizations and/or illness precluding regular attendance to class. Nevertheless, these individuals should have accommodations to support their educational attainments and completing their degrees in the expected time frame. While we acknowledge that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) allows for individuals with these chronic conditions to receive academic accommodations, it is clear that extra safeguards need to be put in place to ensure that those who require accommodations receive the accommodations they need. Further, we recommend that this bill be extended to all levels of education rather than just colleges and universities. This legislation, once revised to broaden its scope by the addition of the words "and other chronic conditions" after "sickle cell disease," should serve to increase awareness of the commonness of chronic medical conditions and the needs for institutions of higher education to accommodate students' need to encourage success. We also recommend adding the Rare Disease Advisory Council, Developmental Disabilities Council, and the Secretary's Advisory Council on Hereditary and Congenital Disorders to the Statewide Sickle Cell Steering Committee on the list of Committees tasked with ensuring appropriate and comprehensive educational materials to be developed.

Council Coordinator

Lauren Whiteman, MPH,

Sincerely,



Ada Hamosh, MD, MPH, Chair