

# MARYLAND RETAILERS ALLIANCE

*The Voice of Retailing in Maryland*



## HB276 State Emergency Medical Services Board- Public Access Automate External Defibrillator Program-Revisions

**February 4th, 2026**

**Position:** Favorable with amendments

The Maryland grocery industry appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 276. Our industry supports the goal of increasing access to automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and improving emergency preparedness across the State. We recognize the important role AEDs play in saving lives and commend the administering agency for working collaboratively with stakeholders throughout the development of this legislation.

Over the course of discussions on HB 276, representatives of the grocery and restaurant sectors worked closely with the agency to address practical concerns related to implementation in retail and food service environments. These conversations were productive and resulted in important clarifications that help ensure the bill advances public safety objectives without imposing unnecessary or duplicative regulatory burdens on businesses.

Specifically, we appreciate the agreement to **exempt grocery stores and restaurants from the AED coordinator and training requirements** under the revised program. Many of our establishments already comply with existing workplace safety standards and employee training obligations, and imposing an additional coordinator requirement would have created operational challenges without a corresponding public safety benefit.

We also respectfully request that the bill clearly reflect that grocery stores and restaurants are **not subject to Education Article §13-517** as part of the AED program revisions. Explicit statutory clarity on this point is essential to avoid future confusion, inconsistent enforcement, or unintended compliance obligations for businesses that were not intended to be covered under education-focused provisions.

With these amendments and clarifications, HB 276 strikes an appropriate balance between promoting access to life-saving equipment and recognizing the operational realities of Maryland's grocery and restaurant industries. We look forward to continuing to work with the General Assembly and the agency on policies that enhance public safety while maintaining a fair and workable regulatory environment.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a **favorable report with amendments** on House Bill 276.

\*\*\*MRA represents thousands of retail locations across Maryland, including grocery stores, pharmacies, big-box retailers, and small, independent businesses.\*\*\*