



State of Maryland
Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems

Wes W. Moore
Governor

Clay B. Stamp
Chairman EMS Board

Theodore R. Delbridge, MD, MPH
Executive Director

January 30, 2026

The Honorable Heather Bagnall
Chair, House Health Committee
241 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB 276 – State Emergency Medical Services Board – Public Access Automated Defibrillator Program – Revisions

—LETTER OF SUPPORT—

Dear Chair Bagnall and Members of the House Health Committee:

The Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) respectfully submits this letter in support of House Bill 276, departmental legislation that seeks to revise and streamline certain statutory provisions pertaining to the Public Access AED Program, which falls under the agency’s purview pursuant to § 13-517 of the Education Article. It also brings one subsection of the Health—General Article into alignment with the bill as proposed.

More specifically, this legislation: eliminates obsolete provisions (references to “regional council AED committee” and the like); adds one exemption to the list of entities that can operate an AED without a valid certificate (namely, law enforcement agencies that deploy AEDs in patrol vehicles); defines the role of the “AED coordinator” in statute (the role is currently only referenced in COMAR); adds a provision requiring the AED coordinator to promote awareness about the AED, its location, and operation among potential or foreseeable operators in case of emergency; includes grocery stores and restaurants subject to 21-330.3 of the Health—General Article in the definition of “entities” (since they register as such in the State’s AED Registry, thereby harmonizing state law with current practice); and makes other technical and clarifying changes.

Maryland’s Public Access AED Program was established in 1999. Since that time, the General Assembly has required that all public schools, county and municipal swimming pools, grocery stores, restaurants, and certain libraries have a registered AED on premises. Since their inclusion in the registry pursuant to legislation passed in 2023, grocery stores and restaurants have been exempt from several of the program requirements imposed on other registered entities. The reprint of this bill makes it clear that they will not assume additional requirements should this legislation be adopted.

MIEMSS respectfully urges a favorable report on HB 276. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like any additional information.

Sincerely,

Theodore R. Delbridge, MD, MPH
Executive Director