



**2026 SESSION  
POSITION PAPER**

**BILL:** HB 1109 – Public Health Reform Act  
**COMMITTEE:** House – Health Committee  
**POSITION:** Letter of Support  
**BILL ANALYSIS:** HB 1109 alters the membership, leadership selection process, and staffing of the Commission on Public Health; requires the Commission to provide oversight of recommendation implementation; requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to consult with local health departments (LHDs) with regard to an electronic health record, organize the Maryland Medical Reserve Corps, and permit Local Health Officers to serve on hospital boards and taken action on certain agreements and contracts in a certain time period; allows the Health Services Cost Review Commission to transfer funds to the Public Health Workforce Development Fund; adds a Local Health Officer to Maryland Corps Program Advisory Board; and other related activities to support the implementation of Commission recommendations.

**POSITION RATIONALE:** The Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO) submits this Letter in strong support of HB 1109. MACHO and each Local Health Officer (LHO) and LHD in Maryland have been deeply invested in the planning, workgroup, assessment, and recommendation development activities of the Commission on Public Health (CoPH) since the creation of the CoPH in 2023. MACHO appreciates that our public health champions in the General Assembly have introduced this legislation. The proposed bill will ensure that the Final Report submitted in 2025 is fully realized to create sustainable improvements to public health systems that benefit everyone who lives, learns, and works in Maryland.

HB 1109 would help ensure several key things important to LHDs:

- **Electronic health record for Maryland’s public health system:** The proposed bill provides the opportunity for LHDs to provide input on a statewide EHR system that could facilitate improved data collection and analysis, improved interoperability, and enhanced coordination with other statewide entities.
- **Strengthening Maryland’s public health workforce** by creating a Public Health Workforce Development Fund and streamlining the hiring process by allowing LHOs to directly appoint positions that are not funded through the state, reducing delays, and ensuring that LHDs are able to quickly move through the recruitment process and hire competitive candidates for key positions in their agencies.
- **Improving healthcare system collaboration and coordination:** The proposed bill will permit LHOs to serve on hospital boards, which will enhance implementation of the state’s AHEAD model and strengthen Maryland’s healthcare system overall.

For these reasons, the Maryland Association of County Health Officers submits this Letter of Support for HB 1109. For more information, please contact Ruth Maiorana, MACHO Executive Director at [rmaioral@jhu.edu](mailto:rmaioral@jhu.edu) or 410-937-1433. *This communication reflects the position of MACHO.*

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