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**Testimony of Delegate Kenneth Kerr**

**HB 322 – Maryland Health Care Commission**

**Membership**

The Maryland Health Care Commission is responsible for studying, planning and regulating major parts of Maryland’s health care system. Despite this broad oversight, hospitals remain one of the few major health care stakeholders without a designated seat on the Commission.

HB 322 addresses this issue by adding a hospital representative to the MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION, ensuring that hospitals have a formal voice in decisions that directly affect them and the communities they serve. For example, the MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION oversees the Certificate of Need program, which reviews and approves new hospital bed capacity and whether to build or develop new health facilities.

Additionally, other key health stakeholders, including nursing homes, physicians, and health insurers, already have designated representation on the MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION, so adding a hospital seat only makes sense.

At MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION’s request, we are offering a technical amendment to change hospital “representative” to hospital “administrator.” This wording more accurately matches the Commission’s existing membership structure and terminology.

We have reviewed the bill with the MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION, and they approved the bill. We would like to thank the MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION leadership and staff for their valuable input on this legislation.

To conclude, HB 322 ensures that hospitals, as a vital part of Maryland’s health care system, finally have a seat at the table for these critical health issues.

I respectfully request a favorable vote.