

SENATE BILL 496

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6lr2703
CF HB 813

By: ~~Senator Hershey~~ Senators Hershey and Lam

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2026

Assigned to: Finance

Committee Report: Favorable

Senate action: Adopted with floor amendments

Read second time: March 6, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Coverage for the Treatment of Obesity**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing, beginning on a certain date, the Maryland Medical
4 Assistance Program to provide comprehensive coverage for the treatment of obesity;
5 requiring the Maryland Department of Health to provide notice to Program
6 recipients if the Department elects to provide the coverage; and generally relating to
7 the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and coverage for the treatment of obesity.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

9 Article – Health – General

10 Section 15–103(a)(1)

11 Annotated Code of Maryland

12 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

14 Article – Health – General

15 Section 15–103(a)(2)(xxvii) and (xxviii)

16 Annotated Code of Maryland

17 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

18 BY adding to

19 Article – Health – General

20 Section 15–103(a)(2)(xxix) and 15–160

21 Annotated Code of Maryland

22 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
2 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

3 **Article – Health – General**

4 15–103.

5 (a) (1) The Secretary shall administer the Maryland Medical Assistance
6 Program.

7 (2) The Program:

8 (xxvii) Beginning on January 1, 2026, if providing coverage for
9 the delivery of anesthesia, shall provide coverage for the delivery of anesthesia in
10 accordance with § 15–862 of the Insurance Article; [and]

11 (xxviii) Beginning on January 1, 2026, shall provide calcium score
12 testing in accordance with § 15–863 of the Insurance Article; AND

13 **(XXIX) BEGINNING ON JANUARY 1, 2027, MAY PROVIDE**
14 **COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE FOR THE TREATMENT OF OBESITY UNDER § 15–160 OF**
15 **THIS SUBTITLE.**

16 **15–160.**

17 **(A) IN THIS SECTION, “COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE FOR THE TREATMENT**
18 **OF OBESITY” INCLUDES COVERAGE FOR INTENSIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY,**
19 **BARIATRIC SURGERY, AND ANY MEDICATION APPROVED BY THE FEDERAL FOOD**
20 **AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION WITH AN INDICATION FOR CHRONIC WEIGHT**
21 **MANAGEMENT IN PATIENTS WITH OBESITY.**

22 **(B) THE PROGRAM MAY PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE FOR THE**
23 **TREATMENT OF OBESITY.**

24 **(C) THE PROGRAM MAY UNDERTAKE UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT TO**
25 **DETERMINE THE MEDICAL NECESSITY AND APPROPRIATENESS FOR TREATMENT OF**
26 **OBESITY UNDER THIS SECTION IF THE DETERMINATIONS ARE MADE IN THE SAME**
27 **MANNER AS DETERMINATIONS ARE MADE FOR THE TREATMENT OF ANY OTHER**
28 **ILLNESS, CONDITION, OR DISORDER COVERED BY THE PROGRAM.**

29 **(D) IF THE DEPARTMENT ELECTS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE**
30 **FOR THE TREATMENT OF OBESITY UNDER THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL**
31 **PROVIDE NOTICE TO PROGRAM RECIPIENTS.**

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before November 1,
2 2027, the Maryland Department of Health shall report to the Senate Finance Committee,
3 the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, the House Health Committee, and the House
4 Appropriations Committee, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article,
5 on whether the Maryland Medical Assistance Program has begun to provide comprehensive
6 coverage for the treatment of obesity as authorized under § 15–160 of the Health – General
7 Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act, and if not, why the Department has not begun
8 to provide coverage.

9 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
10 October 1, 2026.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.