

TO: The Honorable Shane Pendergrass, Chair  
Health and Government Operations

FROM: Danny Lee, M.D.  
Johns Hopkins Community Physicians  
Johns Hopkins Medicine

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Johns Hopkins supports **House Bill 1208 Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Telehealth – Pilot Program**. HB 1208 will require the Maryland Department of Health to apply to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for an amendment to any of Maryland’s §1115 waivers to implement a pilot program to provide telehealth services to program recipients regardless of the program recipient’s location at the time telehealth services are provided. This bill limits the telehealth services under this pilot program to: 1) chronic condition case management services; and 2) behavioral health services.

Johns Hopkins has made significant investments in innovative telehealth projects throughout the state of Maryland. Telehealth can be a powerful tool to address physician shortages, and at the same time expand access to behavioral health services. Provider efficiencies may be improved through decreased travel time and time off work, resulting in lower total cost of care. We have launched pilots in several of our departments aimed at using telehealth to provide care in both traditional and nontraditional settings. However, Maryland Medicaid current restrictive coverage of telehealth services continues to limit severely our ability to serve patients in that program. Most Marylanders insured by commercial payors have access to care through telehealth, regardless of patient location, including the option to access this care from the home. Restriction of this care modality from Medicaid creates a disparity in access to care.

Johns Hopkins continues to launch and grow telehealth services across pediatric adult and subspecialty care, including mental and behavioral health care. These programs have increased ways for our patients to receive clinical care, offering improved access, and convenience with lower overall costs. Johns Hopkins appreciates the opportunity to support the Maryland Medical Assistance program in studying outcomes underneath the proposed pilot to expand telehealth services. Johns Hopkins urges a **favorable report on House Bill 1208 Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Telehealth – Pilot Program**.

cc: Members of Health and Government Operations