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**2021 SESSION  
POSITION PAPER**

**BILL NO:** SB 565  
**COMMITTEE:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
**POSITION:** SUPPORT

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**TITLE: Public Health - Data - Race and Ethnicity Information**

**BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Bill 565 ("SB 565") alters provisions of law advocating for the improvement of health care among minority populations by establishing and supporting programs, services, and resources dedicated to educating the public about health disparities in minority communities. SB 565 requires the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (the "Office") to collect and publish health data that includes race and ethnicity information, and respond to requests for race and ethnicity data within 30 days of the request.

**POSITION AND RATIONALE**

SB 565 calls for collaboration between the Maryland Health Care Commission, the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities, and the Health Occupations Boards of physicians, counselors, therapists, dentists, and other health care professionals. The bill requires the Office to publish a "Health Care Disparities Policy Report Card" with information on racial and ethnical variations in insurance coverage, racial and ethnic composition of the physician population, and the racial and ethnic disparities in morbidity and mortality rates for communicable and non-communicable diseases identified as state priorities, such as cancer, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, and cardiovascular disease.

The Commission supports this bill as it aligns with our work to develop and publish more robust data on healthcare disparities. The Commission believes that alterations to SB 565 will help to improve data quality and programming for minority populations.

The Commission recommends a favorable report on SB 565.

*Note: The Maryland Health Care Commission is an independent State agency, and the position of the Commission may differ from the position of the Maryland Department of Health.*