



March 25, 2021

Delegate Kumar Barve, Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill 184 - Maryland Transit Administration – Reduced Fare Program for Opioid Treatment Program Patients –
Program Requirements
UNFAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Barve,

I am here today on behalf of Clinic Management and Development Services (CMDS) in my capacity as President of CMDS' Residential Programs. I am a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) and a Licensed Clinical Alcohol and Drug-Counselor (LCAD-C), more than 20 years of experience in the fields of mental health and substance use disorders. Having worked with CMDS and with Turning Point Clinic I see firsthand the positive impact we have had in helping people in their battle against addiction.

I was before this Committee during the 2020 Session fighting for legislation (SB705 2020 Session), that did pass, which established in the MTA, a program for OTPs to issue monthly disability bus passes onsite to make it easier for patients to access their daily drug treatment. I was before this Committee again earlier this year in support of House Bill 947 which would have made important clarifications to last year's bill, and ensure this new MTA program reached its fullest intent and potential.

Today, I am here in opposition to SB 184. The bill will prohibit clinics such as Turning Point from participating in the MTA OTP bus pass program. The bill would prohibit a clinic that had a settlement agreement with the state within the last 10 years, from participating in the program. Even if the settlement agreement was completed satisfactorily, programs would be restricted from participating.

The real impact on this bill is that it harms the patients and individuals in treatment. Transportation is a real challenge for patients and a barrier that must be overcome each and every day. Continuity of care is essential to program compliance and better outcomes.

For these reasons I ask for an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 184.

Sincerely,

Bilal Ali

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