



## Senate Bill 865

### *Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Emergency Service Transporters – Reimbursement*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Finance Committee

Date: March 10, 2021

From: Alex Butler and Michael Sanderson

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 865. This bill would create a more reasonable standard for reimbursement, under the State Medicaid program, for deliveries made by emergency transport.

Maryland relies on an array of emergency service providers, including professional and public volunteer ambulance companies. In many parts of the state, billing for transport services, generally through insurance companies, is an essential underpinning to these services. These public entities (the bill only affects public providers), and their relationship to the State-run Medical Assistance program, a principal insurance provider, is the target of the bill.

SB 865 seeks to remedy an inequity in current law, where transportation to a hospital (“facility” in this section of law) is a reimbursable event, but transportation to another location for comparable care is not. Under SB 865, if an ambulance company delivers a patient to an urgent care facility equipped to administer the appropriate care for the patient’s apparent needs, the law would recognize that transport as an appropriate, and reimbursable, event. In some parts of the State, the difference between accessing the nearest fully licensed hospital facility and the nearest appropriate caregiver may be substantial in both miles and minutes.

By creating this level playing field, SB 865 promotes the nearest appropriate care for time-sensitive patients’ transport. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to give SB 865 a **FAVORABLE** report.