



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 849

Public Health- Medical Records- Fees

House Health and Government Operations Committee

March 2, 2021

Submitted by Stacey Jefferson and Julia Gross, Co-Chairs

### Member Agencies:

Advocates for Children and Youth  
Baltimore Jewish Council  
Behavioral Health System Baltimore  
CASH Campaign of Maryland  
Catholic Charities  
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland  
Family League of Baltimore  
Fuel Fund of Maryland  
Health Care for the Homeless  
Homeless Persons  
Representation Project  
Job Opportunities Task Force  
League of Women Voters of Maryland  
Loyola University Maryland  
Maryland Catholic Conference  
Maryland Center on Economic Policy  
Maryland Community Action  
Partnership  
Maryland Family Network  
Maryland Hunger Solutions  
Mental Health Association of  
Maryland  
Paul's Place  
Public Justice Center  
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore  
Welfare Advocates

### Marylanders Against Poverty

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**Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) strongly supports HB 849**, which is aimed at supporting low-income Marylanders with disabilities in better accessing critical medical records needed to secure certain public benefits. This bill would remove financial barriers to accessing medical records.

The amendments from the sponsor would narrow the focus of the bill to one critical role: prohibiting the charging of a fee for providing copies of a medical record necessary to apply for disability benefits under the Social Security Act. This includes federal Social Security and Supplemental Security Income disability programs (SSI/SSDI). MAP is in support of this bill with the sponsor amendments.

The Marylanders applying for these programs are disabled individuals who have little or no income and resources. Even the cost of a medical record may prevent them from securing the assistance they need to survive.

MAP believes that the costs of medical records should not be a barrier to receiving public benefits for those in need. House Bill 849 would remove this barrier and, for this reason, MAP would urge a favorable report on this bill.

**MAP appreciates your consideration and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for HB 849.**

**Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP)** is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.