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January 22, 2021

To: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee

From: The Office of the Attorney General

Re: House Bill 309 (Public Health - Data - Race and Ethnicity Information): Support

The Office of the Attorney General supports House Bill 309 which would expand collection of racial and ethnic data from all licensed health care providers, not just physicians, by the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities in the Department. The expanded data would be used by the Office in implementing its public/private partnerships focused on education and interventions for healthy lifestyles and preventive health. The Office also would use the expanded data when providing grants to HBCUs to promote further research in racial and ethnic health disparities. The bill aligns with a priority action recommended by the Attorney General's COVID-19 Access to Justice Task Force: that we reduce long-standing racial disparities in the health care system and the health outcomes of Marylanders which have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

We urge the Committee to give House Bill 309 a favorable report.

cc: Sponsor