



HB78: Public Health – Maryland Commission on Health Equity (The Shirley Nathan-Pulliam Health Equity Act of 2021)

Position: Support

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CRISP appreciates this opportunity to provide comments on House Bill 78. As Maryland's State-Designated Health Information Exchange (HIE), CRISP's vision is to advance health and wellness by deploying health information technology solutions adopted through cooperation and collaboration. A core component of CRISP's success is the ability to accurately receive and appropriately use sensitive data.

The purpose of House Bill 78 is to establish the Maryland Commission on Health Equity and leverage the State's HIE to make data-driven recommendations. Although CRISP is supportive of efforts to reduce racial and ethnic disparities across populations of patients, CRISP is not the appropriate organization to comment on specific policy recommendations. CRISP does have experience collecting and utilizing complex data sets and asserts the following:

1. **Quality, comprehensive data is a necessary component for decision-making.** CRISP supports the inclusion of a data set, governed by an Advisory Committee, intended to facilitate goal setting and recommendations by the Commission. This is particularly important as recommendations are implemented by the health care industry.
2. **Data must be made actionable in order to have an impact.** House Bill 78 engages a broad coalition of stakeholders with access to diverse information. CRISP is able to create linkages across data sets to generate analysis and meaningful insights. The bill also provides thorough privacy protections, ensuring aggregate external reporting and compliance with all applicable federal and State privacy laws.

The proposed task of the Maryland Commission on Health Equity is complex. If asked, CRISP will leverage infrastructure developed over the past decade to securely receive sensitive data, combine records with existing data sources, and provide reports as the discretion of the Commission. By contributing in this way, the State-Designated HIE will repurpose existing technologies to support the Commission's critical work.