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March 2, 2021

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

From: The Office of the Attorney General's Health Education and Advocacy Unit

Re: House Bill 849 (Public Health – Medical Records – Fees): Support

The Office of the Attorney General's Health Education and Advocacy Unit (HEAU) supports this bill as amended by the sponsor. In a conversation with the sponsor and the Mental Health Association, a proponent, we were informed that the amended bill would add only a single, new provision to the Medical Records Act. The provision would prohibit fees for copies of medical records to support a claim or appeal relating to Social Security benefits or state needs-based benefits (page 3, lines 17-20). The HEAU assists consumers who complain they cannot afford fees for medical records and we believe this new provision would have a remedial effect.

We urge the Committee to give the amended bill a favorable report.

cc: Sponsor