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**House Bill 78 – Public Health- Maryland Commission on Health Equity
(The Shirley Nathan-Pulliam Health Equity Act of 2021)**

SUPPORT

**House Health and Government Operations Committee
January 26, 2021**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of House Bill 78- Public Health- Maryland Commission on Health Equity (The Shirley Nathan-Pulliam Health Equity Act of 2021).

The Maryland Managed Care Organization Association's (MMCOA) nine member Medicaid MCOs that serve over 1.5 million Marylanders through the Medicaid HealthChoice program are committed to supporting all efforts to improve health outcomes for communities of color, working class residents, and individuals with disabilities, and we fully support the creation of The Maryland Commission on Health Equity.

MMCOA supports all efforts to examine collaborative ways to eradicate the health disparities that exacerbate many chronic health conditions, including heart disease, stroke, infant and maternal mortality, lower birth weight, obesity, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, cancer, respiratory diseases, and autoimmune diseases. Maryland's HealthChoice members- as well as all Marylanders- will benefit from the much-needed work of the Commission, and the MCOs welcome the opportunity to be involved in any effort to improve the health and well-being of those we serve.

Given our role in providing care to those who often experience negative physical and behavioral health conditions stemming from health care disparities, and given the experience and knowledge that MCOs have in the health challenges facing those we serve, we strongly support this legislation and look forward to the collaborative solutions that the work of the Commission will bring.

Please contact Jennifer Briemann, Executive Director of MMCOA, with any questions regarding this testimony at jbriemann@marylandmco.org.