



House Health and Government Operations Committee

January 26, 2021

House Bill 309

Public Health - Data - Race and Ethnicity Information

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the pre-existing opioid overdose death fatality crisis has worsened. In Maryland, third quarter data from the Maryland Department of Health shows a 12% increase in the number of deaths in 2020, over the same period the year before. There are also disturbing trends in the impact of the crisis on communities of color. This is just one aspect of the health disparities that exist that must be addressed.

House Bill 309 – Public Health – Data – Race and Ethnicity Information will enhance the capacity of the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities to collect and disseminate data relevant to evaluate and guide policy decisions to address health inequities. The effort must include developing data-driven strategies to address the worsening overdose death crisis among Black and Brown people.

We urge a favorable report on HB 309.

The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.