



Maryland Community Health System

Committee: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 488 - Sales and Use Tax - Medical Devices - Exemption

Hearing Date: February 15, 2022

Position: Support

The Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) strongly supports *Senate Bill 488 – Sales and Use Tax - Medical Device Exemption*. The bill proposes to exempt the following medical devices from Maryland’s sales and use tax: medical and clinical thermometer, pulse oximeter, and blood pressure monitor.

Our network of federally-qualified health centers focuses on providing somatic, behavioral, and dental care to underserved communities. Over-the-counter medical equipment is often not covered by Medicaid, Medicare, or private insurance. Since many of our patients have limited resources, they often face financial difficulties in purchasing this equipment. At-home medical equipment has become even more important in the age of telehealth, and patients take more appointments at home.

As a part of patient-centered model of care, patients should be supported in monitoring their own vital signs. For example, the Mayo Clinic strongly recommends that patients with hypertension regularly monitor blood pressures at homeⁱ. However, patients with limited resources could face challenges to purchase such equipment which can range from \$35 to \$109.ⁱⁱ If such equipment were exempt from sales tax, more consumers could accessible the equipment and could afford higher quality products.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

ⁱ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/high-blood-pressure/in-depth/high-blood-pressure/art-20047889?pg=2>

ⁱⁱ https://www.walgreens.com/store/store/category/productlist.jsp?Ns=Final_Price&Nso=1&N=361299&Eon=361299&No=72