



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

March 9, 2022

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401- 1991

RE: SB 761 – Funding for Wage Increases for Medical Provider Workers – Letter of Information

Dear Chair Guzzone and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of information for Senate Bill (SB) 761 – Funding for Wage Increases for Medical Provider Workers. SB 761 requires existing funding increases mandated for M00Q01.03 Medical Care Provider Reimbursements – Medical Care Programs Administration in Health General 16-201.4 (b)(3) through (6) be directed to wage increases for certain individuals beginning October 1, 2022. The specified healthcare workers who are eligible for the funded wage increases include: health care workers and staff in nursing homes who provide direct care to residents, including housekeeping, laundry, nutritional, and activities services.

While MDH sets reimbursement rates for the services rendered by Medicaid providers, it does not have any role in setting wages or benefits providers pay to their employees. The enforcement of laws that protect workers' rights fall outside MDH's purview. MDH further believes that the mandate requiring agencies to pay a certain hourly rate and report on their compliance falls outside the scope of its authority.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please contact Heather Shek, Director of Governmental Affairs, at heather.shek@maryland.gov or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis R. Schrader".

Dennis R. Schrader
Secretary