

SenGriffith_SB488_FAV.pdf

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PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

Budget and Taxation Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Melony G. Griffith in Support of Senate Bill 488
Sales and Use Tax - Medical Devices - Exemption
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Tuesday, February 15, 2022

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee:

I am pleased to present Senate Bill 488. In 2017, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation that created a State sales and use tax exemption for medicine, medical supplies, health aids, and hygienic aids. Senate Bill 488 seeks to exempt additional pieces of medical equipment that have increased in demand as telehealth access has increased.

Senate Bill 488 will:

- Include thermometers, pulse oximeters, and blood pressure monitors in the same exempt category as other medical devices.
- Increase access to these devices for Marylanders, especially those with fixed incomes and medical vulnerabilities

Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 488, I respectfully request a favorable report.

Testimony In Support of SB 488 - Budget and Taxati

Uploaded by: Rich Ceruolo

Position: FAV



February 14, 2022

Maryland Senate
11 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD. 21401

In Support of SB 488: Sales and Use Tax Exemption – Medical Devices

Members of the Maryland Senate’s Budget and Taxation Committee.

We are an organization of military and non-military families with over 1400 members and fully support exempting medical supplies listed within SB 488 from sales tax.

This bill would be a huge help to families that need the most help during these extremely trying times. Especially those that suffer from chronic health conditions that these devices that aid patients monitor at home as part of their health maintenance plans. That extra money can make a positive impact on many of Maryland’s families, their ability to build their savings, or to afford necessities like medications and therapies.

So many families and elderly are still hurting financially from the past 2 years of health and economic hardships, we all can use a helping hand during these trying times. We hope that the MGA will also work on other constructive ways of supporting working families and elderly populations moving forward. This one is many steps needed to support our varied communities of PAC members.

The future of Maryland’s economy lies with its families that we need to be supporting now and into the future. Let’s support them now when they need it the most.

Please support Senate Bill 488 and return a favorable report. Thank you for your time, and for considering our testimony today.

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Parent Advocacy Consortium (Find us on Facebook/Meta)
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ParentAdvocacyConsortium>

2022 MCHS SB 488 Senate Side.pdf

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Position: FAV



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

2022 MNA SB 488 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Robyn Elliott

Position: FAV



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 Nurses Association (MNA) supports *Senate Bill 488 – Sales and Use Tax – Medical Devices – Exemption*. The bill would create a sales tax exemption for medical and clinical thermometers, pulse oximeters, and blood pressure monitors.

Maryland already exempts many other medical products, such as over-the-counter medications, breastfeeding supplies, eyeglasses, crutches, and batteries for hearing aids from the sales tax. This legislation recognizes the importance of medical equipment that patients use at home in chronic disease management.

With the expansion of the use of telehealth, patients are more often at home for their clinical appointments, so at-home equipment has become more important. This equipment is often not covered by insurance. Eliminating the sales tax for equipment, such as blood pressure monitors, will make it more affordable for Marylanders and encourage its use.

Clinical studies support the effectiveness of at-home monitoring. For example, when patients have at-home blood pressure monitoring equipment and counseling by their providers, their blood pressure metrics improve within the same year and continue to improve in the long-term.ⁱ For this reason, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended this strategy to prevent heart disease and stroke.ⁱⁱ

SB 488 will help make essential at-home medical equipment more affordable for Marylanders. We urge a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

ⁱ Bryant et al. Impact of Self-Monitoring of Blood Pressure on Processes of Hypertension Care and Long-Term Blood Pressure Control. *Journal of the American Heart Association*. 2020;9:e016174

ⁱⁱ <https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/pubs/guides/best-practices/smbp.htm>

2022 The Coordinating Center SB 488 House Side.pdf

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Position: FAV



THE COORDINATING CENTER
INSPIRED SOLUTIONS

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 Coordinating Center support *Senate Bill 488 – Sales Use and Tax – Medical Devices – Exemption*. The bill extends the sales tax exemption for other medical devices to medical and clinical thermometers, pulse oximeters, and blood pressure monitors.

We provide care coordination to individuals with complex medical conditions under home and community-based waivers through Maryland’s Medical Assistance Program. Our clients have increased their utilization of telehealth for routine appointments to help them manage their medical conditions. As a result, they have a greater need for at-home medical equipment, but this equipment is seldom covered by Medicaid or private insurance. We support this legislation because it makes needed medical equipment more affordable for our clients, many of whom face financial challenges.

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