



Maryland
Hospital Association

March 1, 2022

To: The Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chair, House Environment & Transportation Committee

Re: Letter of Support- House Bill 1077 - Department of Housing and Community Development - Racial Equity Impact Assessment

Dear Chair Barve:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment support of House Bill 1077.

As part of MHA's [commitment to racial equity](#), Maryland hospitals are evaluating factors inside and outside of their organizations to promote racial equity and opportunities to address social determinants impacting the health outcomes of Marylanders. We are working with members of our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Advisory Group and Health Equity Task Force identify partners and external opportunities to support these efforts. Hospitals are committed to embracing culturally responsive strategies to address disparities in health outcomes to ensure all Marylanders can be as healthy as possible.

HB 1077 requires that a racial equity impact assessment be completed annually and made available to the public. These analyses are critical for a comprehensive approach to bolster success on the state's population health and prevention strategies.

Quality of life, functioning and health are products of the environments in which persons live, play, work, and age. The conditions in these environments, or the "social determinants", are highly correlated with individuals' health outcomes. In fact, as much as 80% of a person's health can be attributed to factors outside of clinical care. Specifically, there is strong evidence characterizing housing's relationship to health. Housing stability, quality, safety, and affordability all affect health outcomes, as do physical and social characteristics of neighborhoods. Housing is one of the best-researched social determinants of health, and selected housing interventions for low-income people have been found to improve health outcomes and decrease health care costs.

Maryland hospitals supported and participated in the Workgroup on Health in All Places (HiAP), a result of SB 340/HB 1225. The recommendations outlined in the [Workgroup's 2019 report](#), included developing a HiAP framework and urged state agencies to use the newly created HiAP Toolkit, acknowledging the social determinants of health that are the key drivers of health outcomes and racial health inequities. By examining equity in the State's housing and community development sector, HB 1077 aligns with recommendations from the Workgroup.

For more information, please contact:
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