



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

February 16, 2022

Senate Bill 591: Maryland Health Care Commission - Patient Safety Center - Designation and Fund
Written Only Testimony

POSITION: FAVORABLE

On behalf of the members of the Health Facilities Association of Maryland (HFAM), we appreciate the opportunity to express our strong support for Senate Bill 591. HFAM represents over 170 skilled nursing centers and assisted living communities in Maryland, as well as nearly 80 associate businesses that offer products and services to healthcare providers. Our members provide services and employ individuals in nearly every jurisdiction of the state.

House Bill 591 requires the Maryland Health Care Commission to designate a center as the Patient Safety Center for the State on or before December 31, 2025; requires the Center to develop, coordinate, and implement patient safety initiatives across the State, be a model for innovation and implementation, convene health care providers, patients and families to improve the quality of health care and share information on best practices; and establishes the Patient Safety Center Fund to subsidize a portion of the costs of the Center.

Specifically, Senate Bill 591 would provide much-needed state funding for the Maryland Patient Safety Center. I had the great honor of serving for several years on the Board of Directors of the Maryland Patient Safety Center and I have seen firsthand the Centers' commitment to patient safety across all sectors of care. I have reviewed data that illustrates all Marylanders are better as result of the work of the Center.

HFAM has been and will continue to be a sponsor for the Center's events and a serve as a connector for the Center's ongoing initiatives. As we have together fought the COVID-19 pandemic and are now navigating towards a time of new normal, the Maryland Patient Safety Center's work on Caring for the Caregiver and Health Equity are more important than ever.

I am proud of the work we undertook with the Maryland Patient Safety Center in its Falls Prevention and Facility Acquired Infections Collaboratives; each respectively reducing falls and infections in both hospitals and skilled nursing and rehabilitation centers.

While I will leave it to Dr. Eig and others to outline the success of both the Sepsis Survival and Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome work, I will note that this work is impressive and has saved lives.

Over the last ten years, the Maryland Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) has provided start-up funds for the Maryland Patient Safety Center to launch and gain traction in its patient safety and quality work. Those start-up dollars from the HSCRC have now come to an end and other base dollars are

desperately needed. In recent years, the Maryland Patient Safety Center has reduced its annual budget from \$1.9 to \$1.7 million, and while member dues, private sector grants, and event revenue support the important work of the Center, those funds alone are not enough.

The Maryland Patient Safety Center's work in patient safety and quality care across all settings, and its record of accomplishment, are too important to let slip away – especially now as we enter our third year of fighting COVID-19.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report from the Committee on Senate Bill 591.

Submitted by:

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