



STATE OF MARYLAND

Community Health Resources Commission

45 Calvert Street, Room 336 • Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Larry Hogan, Governor - Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Edward J. Kasemeyer, Chair – Mark Luckner, Executive Director

March 31, 2022

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: House Bill 1082 - Public Health – Consumer Health Information – Hub and Requirements - Letter of Support

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Committee Members:

The Maryland Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC) respectfully submits this Letter of Support for House Bill 1082 – Public Health – Consumer Health Information – Hub and Requirements (HB 1082). The bill would accelerate efforts to promote health literacy in our state.

As you know, the CHRC was created by the Maryland General Assembly in 2005 to expand access to health services in underserved communities in our state. The CHRC has awarded 648 grants totaling \$111.9 million, supporting projects in all 24 jurisdictions of the state. These programs have collectively served more than 517,000 Marylanders, most of whom are impacted by complex health and social service conditions and face barriers in accessing health care in their communities. Health literacy is a key factor that impacts the ability of individuals to access health care services and it is especially important when developing programs that will improve access in underserved communities.

The CHRC has experience working with the Horowitz Center for Health Literacy at the University of Maryland School of Public Health. The Horowitz Center is providing technical assistance to the CHRC and its grantees, including Local Health Improvement Coalitions, as they implement CHRC-funded projects to address diabetes in their communities. Our experience working with the Horowitz Center has been favorable, and the CHRC looks forward to receiving future additional assistance contemplated under HB 1082.

Advancing health literacy is an important tool to help address the barriers that underserved communities face in accessing health care. Greater health literacy will ultimately support the state's overall policy goals of expanding health care access, reducing health disparities, improving health outcomes, and reducing avoidable hospital utilization.

For these reasons, the CHRC urges a favorable report on HB 1082. We are happy to answer any questions about our support of HB 1082 or the CHRC's experience working with the Horowitz Center for Health Literacy. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark Luckner
CHRC Executive Director

Note: The Maryland Health Care Commission is an independent State agency, and the position of the Commission may differ from the position of the Maryland Department of Health.