

SB607 Testimony - .docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Antonio Hayes

Position: FAV

ANTONIO HAYES
Legislative District 40
Baltimore City

Finance Committee



Annapolis Office
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 222
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3656 · 301-858-3656
800-492-7122 Ext. 3656
Antonio.Hayes@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Hayes in Support of Senate Bill 607: Health Equity Resource Communities – Modifications

February 22, 2022

Chairwoman Kelley and Members of the Finance Committee,

I am pleased to introduce SB 607, which will make modest program adjustments to the Maryland Health Equity Resource (HERC) program, a landmark five-year program that was approved by the Senate unanimously last year to reduce health disparities and improve health outcomes in underserved communities. I appreciate that my Chair, Senator Kelley, our Vice Chair, Senator Feldman, and Chair Guzzone and President Pro Tem Griffith are co-sponsors of SB 607.

As you will recall, the General Assembly approved last year the “Maryland Health Equity Resource Act,” or HERC Program, which I introduced, that provides a total of \$59 million over several years. The bill was approved last year by the Senate Finance Committee unanimously and by the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee, and I’d thank Chair Guzzone and his Committee for identifying the funding for this important legislation.

The bill that I am introducing this year, SB 607, is a simple and straightforward bill that makes modest improvements that have been requested by the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission as they implement the Maryland Health Equity Resource Act in year two of the program. There is no fiscal note to the bill, and the bill would enable the CHRC to utilize the HERC fund in the FY 2023 budget to cover the staffing costs of two new PINs that are already included in the Governor’s budget for FY 2023. Mark Luckner, CHRC Executive Director, will be following my testimony to describe the intent of SB 607 further.

I am also pleased that the CHRC is moving forward expeditiously to implement the Maryland Health Equity Resource Act and they issued the first round of grant awards last week. I understand that nine initial grantees have been selected by the CHRC and two of these new grantees are here today to speak in support of SB 607 and describe how they will utilize the new funding made available by the Maryland General Assembly to reduce health disparities and improve health outcomes. Thank you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Antonio L. Hayes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "A" and a long, sweeping tail.

Senator Antonio L. Hayes
40th Legislative District - MD

SB0607 - Health Equity Resource Communities - Modi

Uploaded by: Ernest Carter

Position: FAV



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: **SB607 – Health Equity Resource Communities – Modifications**

SPONSOR: **Senators Hayes, Feldman, Guzzone, Griffith, and Kelley**

COMMITTEE: **Finance**

CONTACT: **Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 607**, which would require the Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP) to provide technical assistance (TA) to the Community Health Resource Commission (CHRC) for implementing Health Equity Resource Communities (HERC) as outlined in existing law and would allow compensation for this TA using HERC funds. The bill also allows CHRC to hire program staff using HERC funds.

The Prince George's County Health Department was one of the entities funded by the CHRC for a Health Enterprise Zone (HEZ) project, the precursor for HERC legislation. PGCHD's HEZ created an effective value-based system of care in a significantly underserved zip code (20743) of ~40,000 residents. The program:

- Established a model for care coordination that continues to serve as the basis for population health management in Prince George's County
- Engaged the community and established effective partnerships
- Increased access to primary care medical homes – 58,451 total patients visits at HEZ medical practices (41,614 individual patients)
- Increased community health literacy and expanded the community workforce
- Introduced behavioral health integration
- **Demonstrated a significant reduction in:**
 - **Hospital visits (between 16% - 42%)**
 - **Hospital costs (between 30% - 54%)**

The success of PGCHD's HEZ was quantifiable using CRISP data and would not have been possible without funding from CHRC. **SB 607** would ensure adequate infrastructure in the new HERC program that builds on the previous work of the HEZs across Maryland. Prince George's County's HEZ clearly resulted in cost savings for the medical system, improved community health, and increased access to care for

the population of 20743. PGCHD's newly acquired Pathways grant will build on this work using new funding for HERCs to implement a similar model throughout the county in zip codes experiencing high rates of health disparities. Prince George's County recognizes how critical this programming is to improving health equity in Maryland, and therefore supports any effort to ensure the program is adequately staffed and supported with health information technology.

For the reason stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 607** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.

SB607_fav_AARP.pdf

Uploaded by: Karen Kalla

Position: FAV



One Park Place | Suite 475 | Annapolis, MD 21401-3475
1-866-542-8163 | Fax: 410-837-0269
aarp.org/md | md@aarp.org | twitter: @aarpm
facebook.com/aarpm

SB607 Health Equity Resource Communities – Modifications
FAVORABLE
Senate Finance Committee
February 22, 2022

Good afternoon Chair Kelley and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Karen Kalla, member of the AARP Maryland Executive Council and resident of Anne Arundel County. AARP Maryland is one of the largest membership-based organizations in Maryland, encompassing more than 850,000 members. AARP Maryland is proud to support SB607. We thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony. We also thank Senators Hayes, Feldman, Guzzone, Griffith, and Kelley for sponsoring this important piece of legislation.

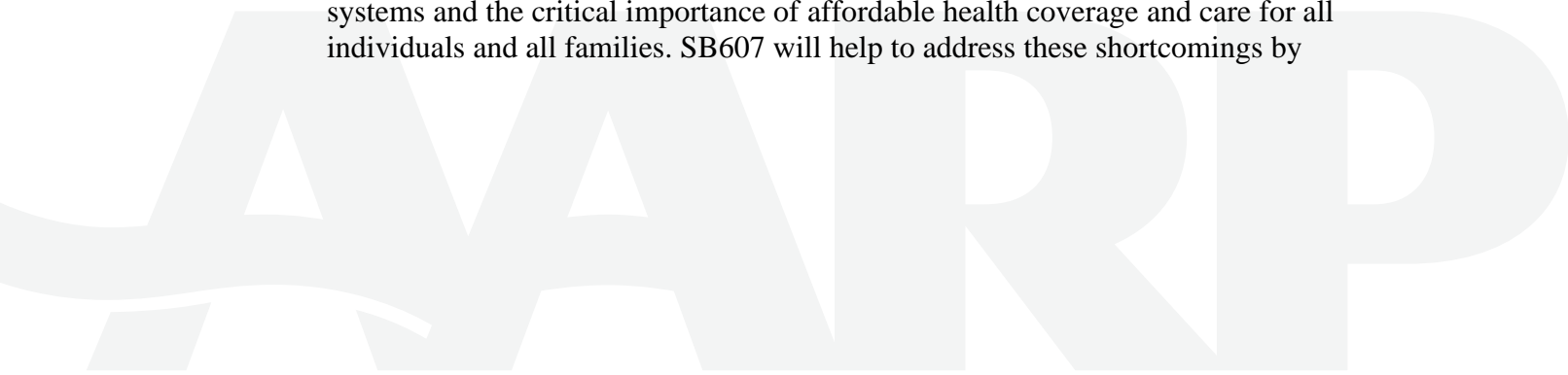
AARP is a non-partisan, non-profit nationwide organization that strengthens communities and advocates on those issues that most matter to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse.

We are pleased to support Senate Bill 607 that would expand the scope of the Health Equity Resource Communities Reserve Fund to include two staff positions and technical support from CRISP (Chesapeake Regional Information System).

Last year, AARP Maryland supported the establishment of the Maryland Commission on Health Equity and this year we continue to advocate for the state to provide the resources necessary for the Commission and Health Equity Communities to succeed in their mission.

In countries like the U.S. where inequality is the most extreme, we see higher rates of obesity, diabetes, cancer, and heart disease, especially for people over 50 and across all income levels. We know that by closing these gaps in health alone, we could add trillions of dollars of GDP in the coming years, not to mention creating longer, happier, and more productive lives for millions of people.

The Coronavirus pandemic has exposed the vast shortcomings within our health systems and the critical importance of affordable health coverage and care for all individuals and all families. SB607 will help to address these shortcomings by



providing a coordinated collection of key impactful resources designed to gain a better understanding of the issues and what Marylanders of color face regarding health disparities. Technical support will help to identify the needs and coordinate the responses. Staff are necessary to manage the outreach and ensure that those needing these health services receive the necessary supports.

The well-being of all Maryland communities is a top priority. The resources outlined in SB607 will contribute greatly to this goal by focusing on the good health and well-being of those living in underserved communities. We appreciate your efforts to support Maryland's Health Equity Communities—and the outcome of a better quality of life for all Marylander's.

For these reasons, AARP supports SB607. For questions, please contact Tammy Bresnahan tbresnahan@arp.org or by calling 410.302.8451.

SB0607_FAV_MedChi, MACHC_HERC - Modifications.pdf

Uploaded by: Pam Kasemeyer

Position: FAV



MID-ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

The Maryland State Medical Society
1211 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-5516
410.539.0872
Fax: 410.547.0915
1.800.492.1056
www.medchi.org

TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Antonio Hayes

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Danna L. Kauffman
J. Steven Wise
Christine Krone

DATE: February 22, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 607 – *Health Equity Resource Communities – Modifications*

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society and the Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers, we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 607.

Senate Bill 607 proposes several modifications to the Health Equity Resource Communities (HERC) program enacted into law in 2021. The bill requires the Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP), the State’s health information system, to provide technical assistance to the Community Health Resources Commission in implementing the program. It also delays the date for issuance of the request for proposals to designate HERCs for one year and expands the permissible uses of the HERC Fund to include the funding of two full time staff positions and to reimburse CRISP for costs incurred in providing technical assistance. The proposed modifications reflected in Senate Bill 607 will strengthen the quality and effective implementation of the HERC program and will contribute to the ultimate success of HERCs in meeting the program’s objectives. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Danna L. Kauffman
J. Steven Wise
Christine Krone
410-607-7000

SB607_MCHI_fav.pdf

Uploaded by: Stephanie Klapper

Position: FAV



MARYLAND CITIZENS' HEALTH INITIATIVE

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SENATE BILL 607

Health Equity Resource Communities – Modifications

Before the Senate Finance Committee

By Stephanie Klapper, Deputy Director, Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative, Inc.

February 22, 2022

Chair Kelley and Members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 607, and special thank you to the sponsors of the bill. Thanks to the Committee's leadership, the Health Equity Resource Act passed in 2021 and the Pathways to Health Equity Program is underway, with projects in nine communities across the state selected by the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC) last week to receive funding to reduce health disparities for their residents. SB 607 provides some technical changes to make the program stronger, including ensuring that the state's health information exchange has resources to assist with data needs, that the Pathways Program projects have enough time to get started before the Health Equity Resource Communities RFP opens, and that the program is fully staffed at CHRC. We commend the CHRC for how it is implementing the program so far, and with these technical changes the Health Equity Resource Act will have its best chance for success. Thank you again to the Committee for your recognized efforts toward improving access to quality, affordable health care for all Marylanders. We urge a favorable report from the Committee on Senate Bill 607.

SB 607- Health Equity Resource Communities- Letter

Uploaded by: Erin Dorrien

Position: INFO



Maryland
Hospital Association

February 22, 2022

To: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair, Senate Finance Committee

Re: Letter of Information - Senate Bill 607- Health Equity Resource Communities -
Modifications

Dear Chair Kelley:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 607. Last year, MHA fully supported the effort by the General Assembly to pass landmark legislation creating Health Equity Resource Communities.

We applaud the work of the Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC) to launch the Pathways to Health Equity Program. The Commission has done a significant amount of work with limited resources. The Pathways program, funded through the state COVID Relief Act, was intended to quickly fund programs to address disparities, specifically those exacerbated by the pandemic. The Pathways RFP was issued in the fall of 2021, and this month pathways awardees were announced.

CHRC advanced this important program with just two full-time staff members. We understand CHRC is hiring a full-time staff member to manage the permanent HERC program. MHA believes with the additional time afforded in SB 607 and the additional staff member to coordinate HERC activities, CHRC can fulfill the original intent of the bill MHA and other stakeholders championed. A full evaluation of the Pathways program will inform HERC program development with the lessons learned from these initial seed grants.

We hope you find this information useful as you deliberate on Senate Bill 607.

For more information, please contact:
Erin Dorrien, Vice President, Policy
Edorrien@mhaonline.org