



Senate Bill 196

Maryland Department of Health - Overdose Report

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Health and Government Operations Committee

Date: March 23, 2022

From: D'Paul Nibber

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 196. This bill extends the scheduled sunset of a report that has proven very useful to county health officers and others who continue to struggle in the fight to combat opioid misuse and overdoses.

There is an existing legal requirement that the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) “examine and report on fatal overdoses involving opioids and other controlled substances.” This bill would - in addition to certain technical changes to existing law - extend the sunset on this requirement from July 31, 2022, to July 31, 2024.

In 2021, opioid-related overdoses and overdose deaths reached record levels in Maryland. To address the ongoing epidemic, county health officers and human services officials have evaluated and allocated resources using the overdose report referenced in SB 196. The report makes certain otherwise inaccessible datasets readily available to county officials including demographic information, Medicaid claims data, and criminal justice statistics. Such data is an important element in the continuing effort.

Understanding the importance of data in managing the ongoing opioid epidemic, counties believe a sunset extension of the overdose report is warranted. For this reason, MACo **SUPPORTS** SB 196 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.