
Planned Parenthood of Maryland

Committee: House Health and Governmental Operations Committee

Bill Number: House Bill 1082 - Public Health - Consumer Health Information - Hub and Requirements

Hearing Date: March 9, 2022

Position: Support

Planned Parenthood of Maryland supports *House Bill 1082 – Public Health – Consumer Health Information – Hub and Requirements*. The legislation recognizes that the University of Maryland Herschel S. Horowitz Center for Health Literacy as the State’s Consumer Health Information Hub.

We have had first-hand experience of the valuable work of the Horowitz Center for Health Literacy. In 2014, the Maryland General Assembly enacted *Senate Bill 790 - Health Insurance - Communications Between Carriers and Enrollees - Conformity with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)*. Sponsored by Senator Delores Kelley, the bill required the Maryland Insurance Administration to create a state form that would allow people to redirect their insurance communications to a different address. Individuals with a heightened need for privacy, including those in situations of domestic abuse, could be endangered by an explanation of benefits form, or similar communication, going to the policy holder in their home. Federal law already allows people to redirect their insurance communications if they feel endangered, but few people knew about this HIPAA protection.

Planned Parenthood of Maryland supported *Senate Bill 790*, and upon its enactment, we collaborated with stakeholders in its implementation. We were pleased when the Horowitz Center for Health Literacy volunteered the Maryland Insurance Administration in creating a consumer-friendly form, rather than a form with dense legal language about HIPAA protections and insurance rules.

We ask for a favorable report on this legislation because we believe other State and local agencies can benefit from the support of the Horowitz Center for Health Literacy in their efforts to produce consumer-friendly materials. If we can provide further assistance, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.