



**2022 SESSION
POSITION PAPER**

BILL: HB 286 – Emergency Medical Services – Paramedics – Immunization Administration – Effective Date

COMMITTEE: House Health and Government Operations Committee

POSITION: Letter of Support

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill (HB) 286 would delay, to January 1, 2026, the effective date for provisions of law that repeal authority of paramedics to administer influenza and COVID-19 immunizations under certain circumstances.

POSITION RATIONALE: The Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO) supports HB 286 as it continues to make possible a critical tool to combat infectious diseases in our communities and continues an effective partnership between Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and local public health departments (LHDs).

HB 286 permits paramedics to continue to administer COVID-19 and flu vaccines to the public as part of public health initiatives. EMS support and assistance in delivering these vaccinations has been critically important and invaluable to LHDs who are charged with ensuring vaccinations in their communities for infectious diseases, but face sustained, workforce challenges after two years of response.

The current pandemic has stretched the ability of the LHDs to reach those in the community who are medically underserved and the most vulnerable. The partnership of EMS and LHDs, has enabled concentrated, targeted vaccination efforts to reach vulnerable populations in assisted living, detention centers, and homebound citizens who would otherwise not be reached in a timely fashion due to the ongoing and sustained pandemic and current workforce shortages.

This partnership has resulted in reduced hospitalizations, reduced emergency room visits, and improved vaccinations against COVID-19 and flu. The flexibility of this partnership allows these two public sectors to react more effectively and in a more holistic way in our fight against COVID-19.

Continuing this partnership extends support of all medical systems in the state, improves healthcare of patients, and provides economic benefits to communities and the state.

For these reasons, the Maryland Association of County Health Officers submits this letter of support for HB 286. For more information, please contact Ruth Maiorana, MACHO Executive Director at rmaiora1@jhu.edu or 410-937-1433. *This communication reflects the position of MACHO.*