



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

March 10, 2022

The Honorable Maggie McIntosh
Chair, Appropriations Committee
Room 121 House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 889 – Public Assistance Programs – Data Sharing and Review (Welfare Program Integrity Act of 2022) - Letter of Information

Dear Chair McIntosh and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) submits this letter of information on House Bill (HB) 889 – Public Assistance Programs – Data Sharing and Review (Welfare Program Integrity Act of 2022).

The OIG is charged with identifying fraud, waste and abuse within the administration of the Maryland Medicaid program (Medicaid). HB 889 would require the OIG to proactively review certain information on a monthly or quarterly basis in an attempt to identify individuals whose Medicaid eligibility may be affected due to a change in circumstances.

The OIG currently investigates incidents of suspected fraud being committed by individuals in order to obtain Medicaid eligibility based on referrals. Those referrals originate from anonymous complaints and other agencies. When the OIG receives a referral, the assigned investigator gathers certain information including death records, lottery winnings and information relating to income (unemployment benefits). The OIG is currently able to access some of the data sources identified in HB 889 in response to a referral. In contrast, HB 889 would require the OIG to proactively review all of the data from the sources listed in the bill. Requiring the OIG to review large amounts of data will substantially increase workloads. Additional staff and resources are necessary to conduct the proactive data review and complete subsequent investigations when necessary.

Lastly, pursuant to SB 12/CH 326 and HB 393/CH 325 (2021), beginning July 1, 2022, the OIG will no longer be a part of MDH. As written, HB 889 would require MDH to enter into data sharing agreements and MOUs with certain agencies to obtain the identified information, and then create an additional mechanism to share that information with the OIG.

If you have any questions, please contact Heather Shek, Director of Governmental Affairs, at heather.shek@maryland.gov or 410-260-3190.

Sincerely,

Dennis R. Schrader
Secretary