



Maryland
Hospital Association

March 15, 2022

To: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair, House Health & Government Operations Committee

Re: Letter of Support- House Bill HB 987 - General Provisions – Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month

Dear Chair Pendergrass:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 987.

As part of MHA's [commitment to racial equity](#), Maryland hospitals are evaluating factors inside and outside of their organizations to promote racial equity and opportunities to address social determinants impacting Marylanders' health. We are working with members of our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Advisory Group and Health Equity Task Force to identify partners and external opportunities to support these efforts. Hospitals are committed to embracing culturally responsive strategies to address disparities in health outcomes to ensure all Marylanders can be as healthy as possible.

HB 987 recognizes the necessity of awareness for the disease sickle cell anemia which impacts 1 in 12 Blacks or African Americans in the United States.

It is important for individuals to know what sickle cell disease is, how it can affect them, and if and how it runs in their family. If left undetected and untreated, SCD can lead to severe health problems and even death, early in childhood. Widespread awareness of sickle cell anemia can aide in addressing the underlying causes contributing to the racial disparities in health outcomes and meeting the unique needs of individuals predisposed to genetic conditions. This will promote increased health equity and ensure progress on the state's population health goals.

For these reasons, we urge a **favorable** report on HB 987.

For more information, please contact:
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