



TO The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Members, House Health, and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Clarence K. Lam

FROM: J. Steven Wise

DATE: March 30, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 734 – *Maryland Health Care Commission – Primary Care Report and Workgroup*

The Maryland Academy of Family Physicians (MDAFP) is the largest professional medical specialty society in Maryland, with over 1,400 members who are practicing family physicians, family physicians in training, and medical students. The Academy requests your **support** for Senate Bill 734.

Senate Bill 734 requires the Maryland Health Care Commission, through a workgroup, to report to the General Assembly on an analysis of primary care investment and ways to improve the quality of and access to primary care services. The workgroup consists of representatives of the Maryland Primary Care Program, the Maryland Health Services Cost Review Commission, the Maryland Insurance Administration, the Maryland Department of Health, payors, and representatives of the primary care physician community, including a representative of MDAFP.

MDAFP strongly supports this legislation as amended by the Senate. As amended, it directs MHCC to first establish a plan for the analysis and its report based on input from workgroup participants, with the plan being due on December 1, 2023. Once this framework is in place, the analysis of the primary care investment will begin. This analysis is an important first step in determining where the State stands in terms of prioritizing primary care of patients, and the analysis has been the baseline for similar efforts in other states, like neighboring Delaware. From this analysis, problems can be identified, and resources directed to ensure that the State is maximizing the use of primary care dollars.

The General Assembly has recognized the importance of primary care in numerous ways, including its consistent efforts to ensure adequate funding for evaluation and management codes in the Medicaid budget, its adoption of Health Equity Resource Communities in 2021, and its work on the Maryland Primary Care Program in recent years, to mention only a few. This workgroup provides a means by which these separate efforts can be analyzed holistically to ensure the State is maximizing the efficiency and value of its investment.

For these reasons, MDAFP strongly supports Senate Bill 734 as amended by the Senate.

For more information call:

J. Steven Wise
410-244-7000