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STATE OF MARYLAND

Community Health Resources Commission

45 Calvert Street, Room 336 • Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Wes Moore, Governor – Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Edward J. Kasemeyer, Chair – Mark Luckner, Executive Director

March 21, 2023

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chair, House Appropriations Committee
Room 121, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Senate Bill 556 – Maryland Community Health Resources Commission – Compensation of Employees - Letter of Support

Dear Chair Barnes and Committee Members:

The Community Health Resource Commission (CHRC) respectfully submits this letter of support for Senate Bill (SB) 556 - Maryland Community Health Resources Commission - Compensation of Employees. SB 556 will provide the same salary setting authority to CHRC that the other two Maryland Health Regulatory Commissions (HSCRC and MHCC) have. This salary setting authority is critical as the CHRC works to fulfill its statutory responsibilities which have significantly increased in recent years. In 2021, the General Assembly passed legislation directing the CHRC to implement the Maryland Health Equity Resource Act. The CHRC has been recruiting for the position of the HERC PROJECT for over a year. Having the ability to set its own salaries will allow the CHRC to attract a deeper, more diverse pool of qualified candidates.

In 2021, the General Assembly enacted legislation directing the CHRC to staff the Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports which is tasked with creating a statewide framework to expand behavioral health services for all Maryland K-12 students. The CHRC will need to fill a number of key positions as the work of the Consortium continues to be implemented and expands.

The Governor's FY 2024 allowance includes a total of six new PINs for the CHRC to help staff the Maryland Health Equity Resource Act and the Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports. The CHRC is eager to recruit and fill these positions and having the same salary setting authority as the HSCRC and MHCC would be helpful.

The CHRC again thanks you for introducing SB 556 and continued support of the CHRC. We respectfully request a favorable report of SB 556, and would be happy to discuss with the Committee should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mark Luckner,
Executive Director

CC: The Honorable Edward J. Kasemeyer, CHRC Chair
Members, Senate Budget & Taxation Committee