



Maryland  
Hospital Association

February 17, 2023

To: The Honorable Benjamin Barnes, Chair, House Appropriations Committee

Re: Letter of Support- House Bill 341 - Transportation - Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs and Transportation Improvement Programs - Equity Impacts

Dear Chair Barnes:

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 341, which requires the Department of Transportation to include the statewide transportation improvement program an analysis of how the transportation improvement program may impact low-income communities and minority communities. These analyses are critical for a comprehensive approach toward addressing the environmental and social drivers of health for Marylanders.

Maryland hospitals care for millions of people each year, around-the-clock. In addition to the care they provide, they continuously evaluate factors inside and outside of their organizations to promote the health and the well-being of the populations they serve and the tens of thousands they employ. Hospitals are committed to addressing the social drivers of health, which includes cross-sector collaboration and investments in the community.

Maryland is consistently identified as one of the richest states in the nation, with a median household income of approximately \$90,000 – well above the national average according to U.S. News and World Report.<sup>1</sup> However, the state also has the dubious distinction of having one of the highest rates of income inequality. Marginalized communities in Maryland struggle with social and economic adversity. Access to affordable housing, educational opportunities, reliable transportation, healthy food, safe play spaces and health care, are not equally distributed throughout the state. To fully address the systemic issues facing many of Maryland's communities, and meaningfully improve the health of all Marylanders, issues beyond direct medical care must be considered.

Findings from the analyses required by this bill are critical for generating solutions to address adverse impacts to health stemming from systemic inequity – critical for bolstering success on the state's population health and health equity strategies. For these reasons, we urge a *favorable* report on HB 341.

For more information, please contact:  
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<sup>1</sup> Fitzgerald, Madeline. (October 7, 2022). *The 10 Richest States in America*. Usnews.com