

TO: The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

FROM: Zakk Arciaga
Trauma Program Manager, Johns Hopkins Hospital

DATE: March 9, 2023

RE: SB493 COMMISSION TO STUDY TRAUMA CENTER FUNDING IN MARYLAND

Johns Hopkins **supports SB493 Commission to Study Trauma Center Funding in Maryland.** This bill establishes a commission to study the adequacy of funding for trauma centers across the State for operating, capital and workforce costs.

Johns Hopkins Health System has seven different trauma centers across the State, including specialty burn units and the trauma center for eye injuries. Typical hospitals do not have the ability to manage all forms of traumatic injury and may not have the sub-specialists needed for the most critical care at all times. A hospital's commitment to being a trauma center requires significant resource allocation.

During the 2003 Legislative Session, the Maryland General Assembly enacted legislation that created the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund (Trauma Fund) to aid Maryland's trauma system by reimbursing trauma physicians for uncompensated care losses and by raising Medicaid payments to 100% of the Medicare rate when a Medicaid patient receives trauma care at a designated trauma center. In the intervening 20 years, a comprehensive review of the Maryland Trauma System and Fund has not occurred even as the needs of the system have grown and evolved. As a result, Trauma Fund designed to reimburse 65% of on-call trauma in 2003 – today reimburses 40% of on-call trauma.

For Johns Hopkins Health System, the on-call trauma shortfall after Trauma Fund reimbursement has grown to \$2.25 million in FY22. And stand by costs for trauma, orthopedics, and anesthesia have increased to \$4.17 million in FY22. Lastly, the costs for specialized trauma staff (nurses & NPs/physician assistants/technicians) has jumped \$13.7 million over the last four years. All of these factors are resulting in a shortfall from GBR rates of about \$23.84 million in FY22.

The State's trauma system is a vital resource for Marylanders. Therefore, there is a responsibility to ensure it is adequately resources. For these reasons and more, Johns Hopkins urges a **favorable** report on **SB493**.