



Senate Bill 281

Commission on Public Health - Establishment

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

Date: February 15, 2023

To: Finance Committee

From: Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 281 **WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill establishes the Commission on Public Health to make recommendations for improving the delivery of public health services in Maryland.

Local health departments and their corresponding health officers manage a significant portion of public health services throughout the state. These leaders see the condition of their communities every day and have an acute awareness of the unique needs in each jurisdiction. However, even amongst health officers, priorities can vary greatly.

The work of all twenty-four local health departments is responsive to the demand for certain services based on community needs. This variability is reflected in a few ways – from budget distribution and types of clinical specialists on staff to the size and accessibility of the programs offered. Considering the geographic, demographic, and psychographic diversity of our state, the public health needs and services in Allegany County are not the same as those in Anne Arundel County. Recognizing this, counties support amendments offered by the Maryland Association of County Health Officers, to ensure that the composition and outcomes of this commission can sufficiently serve the needs of all Marylanders.

Local health departments understand local needs, so it follows that broadened geographic representation from them will benefit the work of this important study. For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on SB 281.