



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**
Senate Bill 281: Commission on Public Health - Establishment
February 15, 2023
Written Testimony Only

POSITION: FAVORABLE

On behalf of the members of the Health Facilities Association of Maryland (HFAM), we appreciate the opportunity to express our support for Senate Bill 281.

HFAM represents skilled nursing centers and assisted living communities in Maryland, as well as associate businesses that offer products and services to healthcare providers. Our skilled nursing members provide the majority of long-term and post-acute care to Marylanders in need and can be found in nearly every jurisdiction of the state.

Senate Bill 281 establishes the Commission on Public Health to make recommendations to improve the delivery of foundational public health services in the State; requires the Commission to conduct an assessment of the capability of the Maryland Department of Health and local health departments to provide foundational public health services; and requires the assessment to consider the State's response to COVID-19 and overdose deaths, and to racial and ethnic disparities in maternal mortality and birth outcomes in the State.

As we have all seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical that all Marylanders have access to quality care. Together we have a tremendous opportunity to work in partnership to rebuild, reform, and come back stronger than before. In order to move forward, we must have systems and policies in place to ensure we understand where to place resources and provide support to better advocate and improve the health of all Marylanders – especially those who have been negatively impacted by health inequity.

Given Maryland's Total Cost of Care contract and our population health initiatives, it is universally beneficial for all stakeholders that we study and improve the delivery of foundational public health services across Maryland.

For these reasons, we respectfully request a favorable report from the Committee on Senate Bill 281.

Submitted by:

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