

KAREN LEWIS YOUNG
Legislative District 3
Frederick County

Committee on Education, Energy,
and the Environment



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 302
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3575 · 301-858-3575
800-492-7122 Ext. 3575
Karen.Young@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 22, 2023

Support of SB 387 – Task Force on Reducing Emergency Department Wait Times

The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair

Finance Committee

Maryland Senate

11 Bladen Street, Room 302

Annapolis, MD 21401

Chair Griffith, Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and Esteemed Members of the Finance Committee:

I am here to propose a Task Force on Reducing Emergency Department Wait Times. Senate Bill 387 will create a task force that will bring together a diverse group of experts to identify the challenges faced by emergency departments and recommend solutions to reduce wait times. The bill will also evaluate states with shorter wait times and apply their best practices in Maryland.

We are proud that Maryland is home to some of the best hospitals in the world. Unfortunately, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services recently reported that Maryland has the longest emergency room wait times in the country, averaging 228 minutes¹. This is a concerning statistic and highlights the urgent need for action to address this issue.

The lengthy wait times in Maryland's emergency rooms affect patients and their families, creating a challenging working environment for emergency room personnel. By reducing wait times and improving the conditions of our emergency rooms, we can improve access to healthcare and support our frontline healthcare workers. As Maryland's population grows, our emergency departments must be equipped to handle our citizens' demands. The task force created by Senate Bill 387 will provide valuable insights into how other states with similar populations and emergency department demands have successfully reduced wait times.

We have seen firsthand the impact that long wait times in emergency departments can have on our citizens and our healthcare system. Therefore, I urge the Finance Committee to support Senate Bill 387 and take action toward reducing wait times in emergency departments in Maryland.

¹ <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/rankings-and-ratings/er-wait-times-by-state.html.html>

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Lewis Young". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Karen Lewis Young