



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

March 28, 2023

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk  
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee  
Room 241, House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

**RE: SB 794 - Behavioral Health Programs - Residential Programs - Food Service Facility Requirements - Letter of Support as Amended**

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of support as amended for Senate Bill (SB) 794 – Behavioral Health Programs - Residential Programs - Food Service Facility Requirements. As amended, SB 794 requires MDH to adopt regulations that establish certain food service standards for certain residential programs that have fewer than 17 residents.

MDH appreciates the bill sponsor and Senate committee's incorporation of MDH's requested amendment that allows MDH to adopt regulations to establish food service standards for these programs. Residential substance-related programs are provided in various settings ranging from residential properties to specialty units located within a licensed healthcare facility. The amendments allow MDH to establish regulations tailored to meet the unique needs of the population being served with regards to food safety standards.

MDH is dedicated to ensuring that residential substance-related programs within a community setting provide a safe, stable, "homelike" environment critical to individuals as they begin their recovery process. If individuals are able to practice and begin using skills and resources while in treatment, they are more likely to be able to maintain their recovery in the months and years following residential treatment.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Megan Peters, Acting Director of Governmental Affairs at [megan.peters@maryland.gov](mailto:megan.peters@maryland.gov) or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.  
Secretary