



Maryland Continuing Care Residents Association

The Voice of Continuing Care Residents

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SUBJECT: House Bill 1143 - Emergency Medical Services - Maryland Emergency Department Wait Time Reduction Commission - Establishment

COMMITTEES: Finance Committee
The Honorable Pam Beidle, Chair

DATE: Thursday, March 28, 2024

POSITION: **FAVORABLE**

The **Maryland Continuing Care Residents Association (MaCCRA)** is a not-for-profit organization representing the residents in continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs). Maryland has over 18,000 older adults living in CCRCs. The principal purpose of MaCCRA is to protect and enhance the rights and financial security of current and future residents while maintaining the viability of the providers whose interests are frequently the same as their residents. MaCCRA SUPPORTS efforts to enhance transparency, accountability, financial security, and preserve existing protections in law and regulation for current and future CCRC residents statewide.

On behalf of the Maryland Continuing Care Residents Association, we support House Bill 1143 which establishes a Maryland Emergency Department Wait Time Reduction Commission. Older adults living in CCRC's are among the state's citizens most susceptible to health emergencies requiring the use of emergency room facilities. They are also unusually vulnerable to delays caused by extended wait times.

The number of seniors using emergency department facilities—both those residing in CCRCs and those living in other parts of our communities—will rise as baby boomers age throughout the state. At the same time, the state's disadvantaged populations—those living at or below the poverty line in urban and rural areas, plus the homeless population in all settings—will remain heavily dependent on emergency room care, due to lower access to preventative health programs. All these populations, as well as others, would especially benefit from measures to improve department responsiveness by reducing wait times.

We support House Bill 1143 and its chief object—a representative Commission to find workable and cost-effective solutions to the issue—because it would be a major step towards the reduction of excessive emergency department wait times and would also involve all stakeholders in crafting solutions.

For these reasons we ask for a FAVORABLE report on House Bill 1143.

For further information please contact: Bruce Hartung, President
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