



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Madam Chair Biedle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, Members of the esteemed Finance Committee,

I stand before you today, grateful for our shared dedication to improving ER wait time in Maryland, particularly addressing our state's pressing challenge of the longest emergency department wait times in the nation.

Quick Context to this bill: Last year, we collaboratively initiated a legislative initiative by sponsoring a task force bill, which led to the formation of an informal work group under the guidance of Senator Melony G. Griffith, Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, and Chair Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair of our committee. We extend sincere thanks to the Maryland Hospital Association for their leadership in this critical initiative. This initiative was in response to the critical challenge of prolonged emergency department wait times in Maryland, the longest in the nation according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Our aim was to assemble a diverse coalition of stakeholders, including healthcare professionals, patient advocates, and representatives from both the Maryland Health Department and the Maryland Health Services Cost Review Commission. This collaboration focused on identifying the root causes of the delays and formulating effective strategies to address them. The insights gained have informed our legislative efforts this session, including the introduction of bills HB1143.

This bill aims to establish the Maryland Emergency Department Wait Time Reduction Commission. This commission, recommended to this committee on January 17th, 2024, and further developed through my participation in the workgroup, is tasked with developing strategies to improve emergency department efficiencies and patient care across Maryland.

HB1143 represents a critical step in our collective efforts to address prolonged wait times through standardized operational protocols, advanced technology solutions, and collaborative healthcare practices. The ongoing support from the Maryland Health

Department, the Maryland Health Services Cost Review Commission, and the Maryland Hospital Association, whose contributions will be instrumental in successful policy outcome.

As we propose the establishment of the Maryland Emergency Department Wait Time Reduction Commission, we are not just addressing a current need but laying the groundwork for a future where all Marylanders have access to timely and high-quality emergency care.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to improving ER wait time for the people of Maryland. I look forward to working alongside all stakeholders to bring the positive changes envisioned by HB1143. I would like to request a favorable amendment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "H. H. H. H.", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.