



**House Health & Government Operations Committee  
March 27, 2024**

**Senate Bill 751 – Public Health - Opioid Restitution Advisory  
Council and Fund – Revisions**

### **Support**

NCADD-Maryland supports Senate Bill 751 which adds additional transparency and timeframes to the spending decisions related to the Opioid Restitution Fund (ORF). It also expands the list of allowable expenditures to include community recovery organizations.

The number of overdose deaths in Maryland in August of 2023 increased by nearly 3% compared to August of 2022. The tens of millions of dollars coming to the state from the opioid manufacturers must be spent on activities that provide intervention, treatment and recovery support services.

Transparency of how settlement dollars are spent is an issue for states across the country. While we believe there is adequate transparency on how the state spends money, Senate Bill 751 proposes to add additional transparency to the money being spent by county and municipal governments that receive money directly from the settlements. We understand local governments are already required to provide reporting under the terms of the settlements. We support bill language that gives the Maryland Department of Health time to identify the best way to make the information publicly accessible.

The creation of the ORF's Advisory Council was intended to provide a level of transparency and community input into how money is spent from the State pot. This Advisory Council has made recommendations to the Secretary and Governor, and we await their decisions about the spending. Senate Bill 751 would add timeframes to those decision disclosures.

Maryland must continue to invest in treatment, peer support, prevention, harm reduction, and recovery support services. We believe Senate Bill 751 supports these efforts and we urge a favorable report.