



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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

February 28, 2024

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 1241 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: House Bill 1143 - Emergency Medical Services - Maryland Emergency Department Wait Time Reduction Commission and Standardized Protocols - Establishment – Letter of Support with Amendment

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for House Bill (HB) 1143 - Emergency Medical Services - Maryland Emergency Department Wait Time Reduction Commission and Standardized Protocols - Establishment. HB 1143 establishes the Maryland Emergency Department Wait Time Reduction Commission. The Commission is tasked with developing plans and strategies to improve hospital emergency department wait times and patient care, establish a system for monitoring and evaluating hospital emergency department performance on wait times and quality care.

The Department understands the need to reduce hospital emergency department wait times and supports the work of HB 1143 to address this critical issue. The requirements of the Commission laid out in HB 1143 will help to achieve the goals of reducing the hospital emergency department wait times.

To effectuate these goals, the Department is aligned with the amendments offered by the Health Cost Review Commission to broaden the scope of the Commission - both in membership and the scope of the Commission's look. These amendments will only strengthen the mission of the Commission and its ability to collect all available data to provide comprehensive recommendations and plans to reduce the emergency department wait times.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov or (443) 826-1851.

Sincerely,

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