



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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

March 27, 2024

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

**RE: Senate Bill 13 – Public Health - Maryland Pediatric Cancer Fund and Commission – Letter of Information with Amendments**

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this letter of information with amendments for Senate Bill (SB) 13 – Public Health - Maryland Pediatric Cancer Fund and Commission. SB 13 alters the use of the Maryland Pediatric Cancer Fund to require that the Fund be used for pediatric cancer research instead of only for pediatric cancer research, prevention, and treatment. This bill also allows for a small portion of the Fund to be distributed to a state-based childhood cancer organization to encourage further donations to the Fund and to increase awareness of its existence within the State’s scientific community. Lastly, SB 13, as amended, establishes a Pediatric Cancer Research Commission (the Commission) to oversee the award of competitive grants from the Fund and requires the Secretary of Health, or the Secretary’s designee, to participate in the Commission.

SB 13 will require the Department to draft regulations. The Department must await the convening of the Commission before drafting the regulations, as the Commission is responsible for developing the criteria, standards, and requirements for the review of applications for pediatric cancer research grants, all of which must be addressed in the regulations. This delay may hinder the Department from promptly administering the Fund. The Department also suggests amendments to the composition of the Commission to ensure membership does not preclude eligible research institutions from receiving funding from the Maryland Pediatric Funds.

The Department estimates that the administration of SB 13 would require at least \$179,947 in fiscal year 2025. The participation of the Secretary, or the Secretary’s designee, in the Commission will require the Department to hire a physician with expertise in pediatric cancer. Additionally, while the bill does not explicitly state who will staff the Commission, if the intent is for the Department to staff the Commission, the Department will require additional staff to provide administrative support.

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](mailto:sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "LH Scott", is enclosed in a faint, light blue rectangular border.

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