



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger and Joseline Pena-Melnyk, Chairs of the House Judiciary Committee and Health and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Natasha Mehu, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: March 7, 2024

RE: **HB 1031 Correctional Services – Medication–Assisted Treatment**

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT HB 1031 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill provides much-needed funding for medication-assisted treatment (MAT) in county jails.

HB 1031 requires the Secretary of Health to provide grants to each county that equal the costs of the MAT program. To receive this funding, which covers the preceding fiscal year counties must submit an annual report to the Opioid Operational Command Center on the number of days each inmate was provided MAT services. Counties may submit for prior state commitments unfulfilled by State funding in reports submitted before October 1, 2025.

When the legislation creating the MAT program in local jails was initially passed, it was under the understanding that the State would cover the costs of the program. Unfortunately, state funding quickly became inconsistent and unreliable. Costs are regularly shouldered by the locals. This bill strengthens the language requiring state funding for the program and establishes the Opioid Restitution Fund as the source of funding. It also creates a uniform reporting process for keeping track of MAT services and the costs owed to counties. It even includes a mechanism for the state to deduct funding for late reports.

However, the bill contains a provision removing the requirement that each FDA-approved medication for the treatment of opioid use disorder be made available. Limiting the medications available for treatment does not align with best treatment practices and would prevent some inmates from receiving the most appropriate treatment. The bill should be amended to retain the original statutory language.

For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT HB 1031 WITH AMENDMENTS** and urge a **FAVORABLE** committee report as amended.