



**HB 935**  
**Informational Only**

TO: The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair  
House Ways and Means Committee

FROM: Raymond Fang, MD, FACS  
Chair, Maryland Trauma Center Network [TraumaNet]

DATE: February 22, 2024

TraumaNet wishes to provide information regarding **HB935 – Comprehensive Community Safety Funding Act**. We appreciate the sponsors' commitment to support Maryland's ten designated trauma centers in delivering life-saving care and the best hope for return to health to our fellow Marylanders after injury that may occur any time of day or night.

TraumaNet is a multidisciplinary advocacy group focused on optimizing trauma care within Maryland with representation from each of Maryland's designated trauma centers and the three specialty centers for burn, eye and hand injuries. TraumaNet promotes excellence in trauma care by focusing on issues related to direct patient care, research, education, injury prevention and healthcare policy. TraumaNet partners with the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) to create a collaborative statewide approach to trauma care.

In 2003, the Maryland General Assembly created the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund ('Trauma Fund') to support Maryland's trauma centers. In the subsequent 20 years, the adequacy of this investment had not been comprehensively reviewed. In 2023, TraumaNet supported the legislation that created the **Commission to Study Trauma Center Funding in Maryland**. The Commission concluded that *"it is in the public's best interest to fund a trauma system that is in a perpetual state of readiness for the next injured person"* wherever in Maryland they may be.

The R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center ("Shock Trauma") anchors the Maryland trauma system and is recognized as a global leader in trauma care. As the state-designated Primary Adult Resource Center, Shock Trauma receives approximately 32% of its patients as transfers-in from other Maryland hospitals. In FY 2023, Shock Trauma treated 24% of the Maryland's adult trauma patients. The majority of trauma care in Maryland occurs in the other trauma centers in the system allowing patients to remain closer to their homes and families and also preserving Shock Trauma's resources for adult patients with the greatest need.

The Commission recognized that all of Maryland's trauma centers are under financial stress due to undercompensated costs to maintain trauma readiness. These costs vary considerably related to level of trauma center designation, patient

volume and geographic location.

The Commission's recommendations include:

- Modifying the existing scope of the Trauma Fund and adding additional flexibility for its administration especially in distributing funds to support evolving trauma center needs.
- Raising the already existing assessment on motor vehicle registration (\$5 per biennial registration) and potentially identifying other revenue sources (such as this bill) to support increased investment in trauma care.
- Directing the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) to audit, standardize and annually report trauma readiness costs that are included in the hospital rate structure for all Maryland Trauma Centers.
- Requiring Trauma Centers develop and report on trauma care quality measures to be accountable for the State's increased investment.

Dr. Thomas M. Scalea, Physician-in-Chief of the Shock Trauma Center, describes his institution as "*a gift from the people of Maryland to the people of Maryland.*" This is true of the entire Maryland trauma system that only exists to care for our fellow citizens at time of potential life-saving and life-changing need. TraumaNet is committed to collaborating with all stakeholders in supporting trauma readiness and optimized outcomes for injured patients at any time and at all locations within Maryland.

cc: Members, House Ways and Means Committee