



**2025 SESSION
POSITION PAPER**

BILL: HB 65 – Community Health Worker Appreciation Day
COMMITTEE: Senate – Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
POSITION: Letter of Support
BILL ANALYSIS: HB 65 would require the Governor annually to proclaim May 8 as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day and require the proclamation to urge educational and cultural organizations to observe Community Health Workers with informative programs and activities.

POSITION RATIONALE: The Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO) submits a Letter of Support for HB 65. This appreciation day is important for recognizing the invaluable efforts of Community Health Workers (CHWs) and raising awareness about the essential work they do to improve public health and support underserved populations. Our local public health departments (LHDs) employ CHWs in many different programs and they deliver invaluable services in our communities.

MACHO provides the following examples of how CHWs have impacted local health outcomes:

CHWs help bridge the gap between health care providers and underserved populations, addressing health disparities and promoting access to vital resources for residents. They serve as trusted advocates, providing culturally sensitive education, outreach, and support, resulting in improved health outcomes and community well-being. Across Maryland, LHDs deploy CHWs to facilitate the connection between needs and available resources, ensuring equitable access to services, and strengthening community-built capacity to address the impact of social determinants of health.

CHWs serve in many divisions and departments throughout local public health, including but not limited to peer navigation and connection, harm reduction, care coordination, community outreach and engagement, health education, mobile health, maternal and child health services, environmental health services, and chronic disease management. Their multi-disciplinary knowledge, cultural competency, and diverse skill set are essential to the work of LHDs, supporting a wide range of critical services that promote community well-being.

Recognizing CHWs for their hard work by establishing May 8th as a dedicated annual Community Health Worker Appreciation Day will honor their significant contributions to our state. It will also provide a platform to bring attention to the necessary resources, training, and support these important public health staff need to continue their vital work in improving community and public health.

For these reasons, MACHO submits this Letter of Support for HB 65. For more information, please contact Ruth Maiorana, MACHO Executive Director at rmaiora1@jhu.edu or 410-937-1433. *This communication reflects the position of MACHO.*