

HB 65_CHW Coalition_Favorable_EEE.pdf

Uploaded by: Ashley Woolard

Position: FAV



<https://bit.ly/CHW-MD>
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HB 65
Community Health Worker Appreciation Day
Hearing of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
April 3, 2025
1:00 PM

FAVORABLE

The **Community Health Workers Empowerment Coalition of Maryland (CHWEC-MD)** is a coalition of CHWs and those who train, educate, support, and employ them across the state of Maryland. Our collective goals are to 1) reduce disparities in healthcare access and outcomes for Marylanders by expanding access to CHWs, 2) ensure that the voices of Maryland's CHWs are represented in the creation of laws and policies that impact the profession, and 3) advocate with CHWs for solutions that address systemic inequities that they experience in the field, including a lack of reimbursement for their services. We stand in **strong support of HB 65**, which would require the Governor to proclaim May 8th as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day in Maryland. It would also urge educational and cultural organizations to promote the work of CHWs with informative programs and activities.

A CHW is a frontline public health worker that is a trusted member of their community with a deep understanding of the barriers to attaining good health that their community faces. They often share similar lived experiences with the communities they serve, which puts them in the position to be a connection between healthcare providers and the community. CHWs are part of a comprehensive approach to patient health. They not only provide education and information to patients on health, but they also help address social determinants of health like access to food, transportation, and housing by helping patients navigate social services. CHWs in Maryland are embedded in a variety of settings across our healthcare system such as substance use disorder and mental health clinics, hospitals, and maternal health providers. In fact, Maryland is the proud home of the 4th largest CHW workforce in the country with nearly 2,500 employed CHWs.¹

CHWs advance health equity in Maryland but lack recognition for their contributions to improving health outcomes. Though Maryland has a large CHW workforce, our CHWs face

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wages – 21-1094 Community Health Workers (May 2022), <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211094.htm>.

significant barriers to remaining in their field. Maryland's Medicaid program does not currently reimburse CHW services. Many CHW positions are supported only by short term funding, which is a barrier to creating sustainable careers in the profession. Grants available to support CHWs often restrict them to working with patients with specific diseases or in a specific setting instead of engaging in the holistic, community-focused work that make CHWs such an effective health intervention. Once the grant funding dries up, CHWs may have no choice but to leave the field to pursue other financially sustainable career paths.

If passed, HB 65 would contribute to directly addressing these barriers by educating potential employers of CHWs on the value of their work and how to better integrate them into care teams. It would also help raise awareness among Marylanders of the importance of CHW's in advancing health equity. Finally, HB 65 would help our state prioritize identifying financially sustainable pathways for supporting CHW services and keeping practicing CHW's in the field.

Thank you for your consideration, and we respectfully urge this Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report for **HB 65**. Should you have any questions about this testimony, please contact Ashley Woolard at woolarda@publicjustice.org, or call 410-625-9409 ext. 224.

HB 65_PJC_Favorable_EEE.pdf

Uploaded by: Ashley Woolard

Position: FAV



Ashley Woolard, Staff Attorney
Public Justice Center
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Baltimore, Maryland 21201
410-625-9409, ext. 224
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HB 56
Community Health Worker Appreciation Day
Hearing of the Senate Education, Energy & Environment Committee
April 3, 2025
1:00 PM

FAVORABLE

The Public Justice Center (PJC) is a not-for-profit civil rights and anti-poverty legal services organization which seeks to advance social justice, economic and racial equity, and fundamental human rights in Maryland. Our Health and Benefits Equity Project advocates to protect and expand access to healthcare and safety net services for Marylanders struggling to make ends meet. We support policies and practices that are designed to eliminate economic and racial inequities and enable every Marylander to attain their highest level of health. We **strongly support HB 65**, which would require the Governor to annually proclaim May 8th as Community Health Worker (CHW) Appreciation Day. It would also urge educational and cultural organizations to promote the work of CHWs with informative programs and activities.

CHWs are a vital building block in achieving true health equity across Maryland. With pride, Maryland has the 4th largest CHW workforce in the country while Baltimore City has the 5th largest CHW workforce among metropolitan areas in the country. Because CHWs often come from the communities that they serve and share common barriers to attaining good health with their community, they are in a unique position to build trust and provide a patient-centered approach to care. Through education, advocacy and social support, CHWs help eliminate racial and economic disparities in health outcomes. But we've fallen behind in recognizing the value and contributions of these incredible frontline public health workers to patient care and continuity in care. Despite evidence that CHWs help reduce health disparities and generate significant cost savings for our healthcare system, Maryland's Medicaid program still does not reimburse their services.

HB 65 is a meaningful step in publicly recognizing this unique workforce and their undoubtedly impactful contributions to improving the health of low-income patient communities. For these reasons, the Public Justice Center urges the committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report for **HB 65**. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony. If you have any questions about this testimony, please contact Ashley Woolard at 410-625-9409 ext. 224 or woolarda@publicjustice.org.

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wages – 21-1094 Community Health Workers (May 2022), <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211094.htm>.

MLU Support Letter - HB65.pdf

Uploaded by: Carlos Orbe, Jr.

Position: FAV

March 11, 2025

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk

Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support for HB 65 – Community Health Worker Appreciation Day

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk,

Maryland Latinos Unidos (MLU) is honored to express our strong support for House Bill 65, *Community Health Worker Appreciation Day*. This legislation proposes that the Governor annually proclaim May 8 as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day, urging educational and cultural organizations to observe this day with informative programs and activities.

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are vital connectors between healthcare systems and the communities they serve, particularly within Maryland's Latino population. Their roles encompass health education, advocacy, and the provision of essential services, often bridging cultural and linguistic gaps that can impede access to care. By establishing a dedicated day of appreciation, HB 65 acknowledges the indispensable contributions of CHWs and emphasizes the importance of their work in promoting public health.

Through our initiatives, MLU has witnessed the profound impact CHWs have on improving health outcomes. They not only provide critical health information but also build trust within communities, encouraging preventive care and healthier lifestyles. Recognizing their efforts aligns with MLU's mission to advance health equity and empower underserved populations.

We believe that formalizing Community Health Worker Appreciation Day will elevate the visibility of CHWs, attract more individuals to this essential profession, and encourage support for policies that enhance their training and resources. This recognition is a meaningful step toward a more equitable healthcare system that values and supports those who are instrumental in its delivery.

MLU urges the Health and Government Operations Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 65, reinforcing Maryland's commitment to acknowledging and supporting the pivotal role of Community Health Workers in fostering healthier communities.

Sincerely,

Carlos Orbe, Jr.
Communications and Public Affairs Specialist
Maryland Latinos Unidos
corbejr@mdlatinosunidos.org

HB65_FAV_Sponsor.pdf

Uploaded by: Heather Bagnall

Position: FAV



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 11, 2025

HB65 - Community Health Worker Appreciation Day

Good afternoon Madam Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present House Bill 65.

Community health workers (CHWs) are a key part of Maryland's health care workforce, but their work often goes unrecognized from the public and even sometimes those immersed in the healthcare ecosystem. CHWs provide a variety of services in areas of critical need. Without their dedication to providing important care, including preventative screenings and patient education, on a person-to-person basis, the overall health of underserved communities would certainly be jeopardized. The American Medical Association¹, among other organizations, recognize the value in health care as well as costs savings resulting from the preventive care provided CHWs.

Raising awareness of the hard work of these professionals is not only about recognition - it is about building a policy framework that ensures access to quality care for those who would not otherwise have the means to access preventative or behavioral care on a personal level.

HB65, which passed unanimously from this Committee and the House last year, requires the Governor to annually proclaim May 8th Community Health Worker Appreciation Day in Maryland. The language of the proclamation is modeled after a similar version adopted in Ohio in 2022.²

¹ <https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/scope-practice/how-community-health-workers-can-help-improve-outcomes-cut-costs>

² [https://healthcareaccessnow.org/chw-day-news/#:~:text=FOR%20IMMEDIATE%20RELEASE%20Governor%20Mike,\(CHW\)%20Day%20in%20Ohio](https://healthcareaccessnow.org/chw-day-news/#:~:text=FOR%20IMMEDIATE%20RELEASE%20Governor%20Mike,(CHW)%20Day%20in%20Ohio)

Several other states, including Indiana³, Michigan⁴, and New Mexico⁵ have also adopted formal recognitions of the diligent and important work of CHWs, and the US Department of Health and Human Services declared the last week in August of 2023 National Community Health Worker Awareness week.⁶

We have the ability to add Maryland to this list of states, and continue the conversation about how best to ensure the health needs of underserved Marylanders can be met. I respectfully ask for a favorable report on HB568.

³ <https://www.inchwa.org/CHWAppreciationDay>

⁴ <https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/news/proclamations/2023/08/01/august-2023-community-health-worker-appreciation-month#:~:text=WHEREAS%2C%20during%20this%20month%2C%20we,Worker%20Appreciation%20Month%20in%20Michigan.>

⁵ <https://www.nmhealth.org/news/awareness/2022/10/?view=1900>

⁶ <https://www.hhs.gov/blog/2023/08/28/celebrating-community-health-workers.html>

2025 MCHS HB 65 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Jennifer Navabi

Position: FAV



Maryland Community Health System

Committee: Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

Bill: House Bill 65 - Community Health Worker Appreciation Day

Hearing Date: April 2, 2025

Position: Support

Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *House Bill 65 - Community Health Worker Appreciation Day*. This bill requires the Governor to proclaim May 8th as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day.

As a network of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), we work towards more equitable health care by providing somatic, behavioral, and oral health services to underserved communities. We have great respect for Community Health Workers (CHWs), who play a unique role in the pursuit of more equitable health care by serving as a bridge between communities and health care systems. As trusted members of their communities, they connect community members to health care services and other resources, disseminate culturally and linguistically appropriate public health information, and serve as advocates for community members.

Recognition of CHWs has increased in recent years, but more needs to be done to educate people about the potential of the CHW workforce in the lives of Marylanders. For example, the Community Preventive Services Task Force recommends engaging CHWs to increase cervical cancer screening, based on strong evidence that CHW delivered interventions increased screenings.¹ This kind of recommendation highlights just one of the many ways CHWs can improve lives in the communities they serve.

We urge a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

¹ Community Preventive Services Task Force, Cancer Screening: Interventions Engaging Community Health Workers – Cervical Cancer <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/media/pdf/Cervical-Cancer-Screening-CHW-508.pdf>

2025 MCHS HB 65 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Jennifer Navabi

Position: FAV



Maryland Community Health System

Committee: Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

Bill: House Bill 65 - Community Health Worker Appreciation Day

Hearing Date: April 2, 2025

Position: Support

Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *House Bill 65 - Community Health Worker Appreciation Day*. This bill requires the Governor to proclaim May 8th as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day.

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Recognition of CHWs has increased in recent years, but more needs to be done to educate people about the potential of the CHW workforce in the lives of Marylanders. For example, the Community Preventive Services Task Force recommends engaging CHWs to increase cervical cancer screening, based on strong evidence that CHW delivered interventions increased screenings.¹ This kind of recommendation highlights just one of the many ways CHWs can improve lives in the communities they serve.

We urge a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

¹ Community Preventive Services Task Force, Cancer Screening: Interventions Engaging Community Health Workers – Cervical Cancer <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/media/pdf/Cervical-Cancer-Screening-CHW-508.pdf>

2025 Moveable HB 65 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Jennifer Navabi

Position: FAV



Committee: Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

Bill Number: House Bill 65 – Community Health Worker Appreciation Day

Hearing Date: April 2, 2015

Position: Support

Moveable Feast supports House *Bill 65 – Community Health Worker Appreciation Day*. This bill requires the Governor to declare May 8th as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day.

Moveable Feast’s mission is to improve the health of Marylanders experiencing food insecurity and chronic illness by preparing and delivering medically tailored meals and providing nutrition education, thereby achieving racial, social, and health equity. Community Health Workers often connect qualifying community members to services like ours. Research shows that this connection helps improve lives and saves money¹. Bringing attention to the value of community health workers is a worthy endeavor, to educate more people about their role in improving community health.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

¹ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12723008/>

2025 TCC HB 65 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Jennifer Navabi

Position: FAV



Committee: Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

Bill Number: House Bill 65 – Community Health Worker Appreciation Day

Hearing Date: April 2, 2025

Position: Support

The Coordinating Center supports *HB 65 – Community Health Worker Appreciation Day*. This bill requires the Governor to declare May 8th as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day.

Our organization provides care coordination services to nearly 10,000 Marylanders annually to individuals enrolled Maryland Medicaid programs, including home and community-based service waivers and other programs such as the Rare and Expensive Case Management (REM) program. Our goal is to support our clients in living as independently as possible within their own communities. Community Health Workers also connect community members to services that help them live independently in the community. We know from experience that this connection helps improve lives, and research shows that it also saves moneyⁱ. Highlighting the value of community health workers in this way would be a worthwhile teaching opportunity.

If we can provide any additional information that is helpful, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

ⁱ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12723008/>

Health Care for the Homeless - HB 65 FAV - Communi

Uploaded by: Joanna Diamond

Position: FAV

HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS TESTIMONY
IN SUPPORT OF
HB 65 - Community Health Worker Appreciation Day

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
April 3, 2025



Health Care for the Homeless strongly supports HB 65, which would proclaim May 8th as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day and urge educational and cultural organizations to observe community health workers with informative programs and activities.

Community Health Workers are a cornerstone of the care we provide at Health Care for the Homeless and welcome an official day to recognize their critical contributions to the health and well-being of our most vulnerable populations. Here are firsthand accounts of the importance of Community Health Workers from Health Care for the Homeless staff:

Justine Wright, CMA, Community Health Worker, Mobile Clinic

Community healthcare workers are essential in facilitating communication between providers and healthcare organizations, building a trusting relationship with the community they represent, helping people understand their health and social conditions, and advocating for those who need it. As CHWs, we help clients navigate through what is already a challenging time for them as they are experiencing homelessness. We connect them with community resources and provide transportation to various appointments for clients who otherwise would need a way there.

Isaac Epstein, Community Health Worker, Baltimore County

I believe CHW work is particularly important because it addresses SDOH in a way that primary care and case management appointments often cannot. Our work lowers barriers to people who need care most. Case management and primary care are often confined to office settings. This limits the extent of aid one can render to a client. Additionally, the clinical environment and time constraints put patients on edge and makes them feel they don't have the space to address all their needs, which is unfortunately true in many ways.

The work that we do is synergistic with the providers and social workers. Case managers will often provide a list of numbers or resources for clients to access, but have to see their next client before being able to work through all the numbers and applications with the client. As a CHW I have more flexibility with my time to work through these processes with clients. When a provider creates a number of referrals, often patients will not follow up either because they do not know how to navigate scheduling a referral appointment or do not have transport to said appointment. I find that having a close relationship with the physician I am under is extremely important. With the high number of patients most providers see today, I feel that many patients may think of themselves as unseen. In my position I am able to act as a link between the patient and provide because I share a personal relationship with both parties. This leads to more trust with the medical community and I have witnessed that after starting relationships with patients, their adherence habits tend to strengthen and in some cases reach a point where they are independent and responsible enough to stop relying on my services.

We also often fill gaps that are completely unaddressed by any other roles in medical systems. Things like helping patients access shelter, performing housing searches, transporting clients and making home drop offs/home visits have great impacts but are not addressed by any other kind of healthcare professionals. In less than a year, I collected many anecdotes of how without my services clients would be in significantly worse positions: I have found suitable housing for a client days before their housing voucher expired after having not utilized it for 6 years, I have talked someone through suicidal ideation who then started engaging in services with us and subsequently entered a treatment program, I have taken a patient to the emergency room for a septic infection which resulted in amputation, this client would likely not have access the ED if it was not for my encouragement, I have walked a mother and daughter through the process of finding stable housing from living in a hotel, to accessing shelter, to being placed in subsidized housing. In all of these cases I believe that without my services these clients would either have become more chronically street homeless or even have died. While these are some of the more dramatic cases, all of the work we do makes patients feel seen and cared for. While our services may not be billable I feel that the work that we do is deeply appreciated by the people we serve and that it would be missed by them if we were no longer here.

Lawanda Williams, MPH, LCSW-C, Chief Behavioral Health Officer

Community health workers emerge as leaders each and every day. Even amid the challenges presented by a pandemic, community health workers showed up with valor, tirelessly ensuring that vulnerable individuals had access to health care and essential food and medicine. Their dedication not only safeguarded public health but also exemplified the crucial role these frontline workers play in creating resilient, healthy communities. It is imperative that we lift up CHWs and recognize their indispensable contributions. We must find sustainable ways to support such pivotal roles in promoting health equity and community wellbeing.

The importance of CHWs in the health cycle and in health outcomes cannot be overstated. Our clients' lives and health depend on CHWs in the integration of their care. We stand in support of this bill and we urge a favorable report.

Health Care for the Homeless is Maryland's leading provider of integrated health services and supportive housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. We deliver medical care, mental health services, state-certified addiction treatment, dental care, social services, housing support services, and housing for over 10,000 Marylanders annually at sites in Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

Our Vision: Everyone is healthy and has a safe home in a just and respectful community.

Our Mission: We work to end homelessness through racially equitable health care, housing and advocacy in partnership with those of us who have experienced it.

For more information, visit www.hchmd.org.

HB65_MoCoDHHS_Frey_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Leslie Frey

Position: FAV



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270

HB 65

DATE: April 3, 2025

SPONSOR: Delegate Bagnall

ASSIGNED TO: Education, Energy, and the Environment

CONTACT PERSON: Leslie Frey (leslie.frey@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: FAVORABLE (Department of Health and Human Services)

Community Health Worker Appreciation Day

House Bill 65 would require the Governor to proclaim May 8th as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day. The proclamation would urge educational and cultural organizations to observe the occasion with information programs and activities. The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services supports House Bill 65 and the important work that Community Health Workers do in our communities.

Community health workers are trusted members of the community with local knowledge and shared life experiences that make them uniquely able to identify problems contributing to health disparities, improve access to health services, and connect people to needed social services.¹ Public health departments, such as the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, community-based organizations, health systems and insurers have increased employment of Community Health Workers, in part to enhance their ability to address social determinants of health, support access to primary and preventive health programs, and reduce unnecessary use of services for conditions that can be managed by primary care among difficult-to-serve populations.² Increased job growth and employment among Community Health Workers reflects the increasing demand for services delivered by Community Health Workers. In 2020, an estimated 64,100 Community Health Workers were employed in the United States. The majority of Community Health Workers are Hispanic (35%), non-Hispanic White (39%), Black (15.5%), and female (82%). The US Bureau of Labor Statistics has projected a 21% increase in Community Health Workers jobs by 2030, a rate of growth much faster than the average for all US occupations (7.7%).³

For these reasons, Community Health Workers deserve to be recognized by the State of Maryland and honored for their contributions to the health and well-being of Marylanders. The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services urges a favorable report of House Bill 65.

¹ Jones, TM, *et al.* Hourly Wages and Turnover of Community Health Workers According to US State Certification Policy and Medicaid Reimbursement, 2010–2021. *American Journal of Public Health* 112, 1480-1488, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2022.306965>.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

HB 65 - EEE - MDH - LOS.docx (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Meghan Lynch

Position: FAV



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Ryan Moran, Dr.PH, Acting Secretary

April 3, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 65 – Community Health Worker Appreciation Day– Letter of Support

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of support for House Bill 65 – Community Health Worker Appreciation Day.

House Bill 65 (HB 65) requires the Governor to annually proclaim May 8th as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day, and urge educational and cultural organizations to observe the Community Health Worker Appreciation Day with informative programs and activities.

On May 8, 2018, the Community Health Worker (CHW) Act was signed into law, which established the State CHW Advisory Committee, the certification of CHWs, and the accreditation of CHW Certification Training Programs within MDH. The proposed proclamation of a Community Health Worker Appreciation Day is supported by MDH as it provides an opportunity for MDH to formally recognize and celebrate the more than 2000 CHWs certified by MDH since the program's inception in 2018.

A Community Health Worker Appreciation Day will also allow MDH to appreciate the critical partnership and contribution of CHWs as members of the state's public health and healthcare workforce. CHWs act as liaisons between health and social services, and the communities they serve to improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery.

MDH CHW Program staff, the State CHW Advisory Committee, and other MDH partners will collaborate with CHW workforce organizations and stakeholders to engage CHWs across the state in celebrating the CHW Appreciation Day.

If you have any further questions, please contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director, Office of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Ryan B. Moran, DrPH, MHSA
Acting Secretary

Maryland Catholic Conference_FAVHB65_ SENATE CROSS

Uploaded by: Michelle Zelaya

Position: FAV



April 4th 2025

HB65

**Community Health Worker Appreciation Day
Education, Energy and Environment Committee
Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **House Bill 65**. The Maryland Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

The Community Health Worker Appreciation Day requires the Governor to annually proclaim May 8 as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day. This proclamation encourages educational and cultural organizations to observe the day with informative programs and activities that highlight the invaluable contributions of community health workers. These professionals play a vital role in bridging healthcare gaps, promoting preventive care, and addressing social determinants of health, particularly for underserved and vulnerable populations.

House Bill 65 aligns with the principles of the dignity of work, solidarity, and the common good. Community health workers serve as advocates for health equity, ensuring that all individuals, especially the poor, marginalized, and uninsured—receive essential care and resources. Their work embodies the Church's call to care for the sick and uphold the dignity of every person, reinforcing the moral responsibility to provide equitable healthcare access for all. Recognizing their contributions uplifts their essential work, affirms their dignity, and highlights their role in fostering healthier communities.

At the individual and community level, this legislation fosters greater awareness and appreciation for community health workers, who often operate in challenging environments to ensure that families receive preventive care, health education, and support services. Their efforts reduce health disparities, prevent chronic disease, and strengthen the healthcare system, making communities healthier and more resilient. A dedicated day of recognition brings visibility to their work, encourages support for community health initiatives, and inspires future healthcare workers to serve in these critical roles.

From a policy standpoint, **House Bill 65** emphasizes the importance of investing in community health programs and workforce development. By formally recognizing community health workers, Maryland affirms its commitment to equitable healthcare access and acknowledges the critical role these professionals play in public health infrastructure.

House Bill 65 encourages continued efforts to support, train, and expand the community health workforce, ensuring that more individuals receive the care and education needed to lead healthier lives. This approach is consistent with Catholic values of justice, human dignity, and preferential care for the vulnerable, reinforcing the need for compassionate and accessible healthcare systems that serve all members of society.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **House Bill 65**.

HB 65 – CHW Appreciation Day – SEN EEE 4-3-25 – MA

Uploaded by: State of Maryland (MD)

Position: FAV



**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.*

HB 65.pdf

Uploaded by: Tiffany Scott

Position: FAV

HB 65
Community Health Worker Appreciation Day
Hearing of the Senate Education, Energy & The Environment Committee
April 3rd, 2025
1:00 PM

Position: SUPPORT

My name is Tiffany Scott, I serve as the Co-founder, President, and Chair of the Maryland Community Health Worker Association (CHW) and the Vice Chair of the Maryland CHW Advisory Committee. I am also proud to be the first certified Community Health Worker in the state of Maryland. I am writing in strong support of HB 65, which would require the Governor to annually proclaim May 8th as Community Health Worker Appreciation Day. This proclamation would urge educational and cultural organizations to observe Community Health Workers with informative programs and activities.

Community Health Workers play a critical role in public health and healthcare systems, bridging gaps between communities and essential services. CHWs work tirelessly to address social determinants of health, advocate for underserved populations, and connect individuals to vital resources that improve their well-being. Their work reduces health disparities, enhances access to care, saves the health care system money and promotes healthier communities across Maryland.

HB 65 is important to me because CHWs deserve recognition for the invaluable work they do every day. Despite being frontline public health professionals, CHWs often operate without the acknowledgment and support they deserve. A dedicated Community Health Worker Appreciation Day would not only honor the commitment and impact of CHWs but also increase public awareness and understanding of the field. Furthermore, this recognition can encourage greater investment in CHW programs, workforce development, and long-term sustainability for the profession.

As someone who has dedicated my career to advancing the CHW profession in Maryland, I know firsthand the challenges CHWs face—from financial barriers to workforce recognition and professional growth opportunities. This proclamation would be a meaningful step in elevating the profession and ensuring that CHWs continue to thrive in their essential roles.

Thank you, and I urge the Committee to please vote **YES** on HB 65 to **declare May 8th as CHW Appreciation Day in Maryland.**

Sincerely,



Tiffany Scott, CCHW, CHWI

