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MAYOR

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SB0458

February 11, 2025

TO: Members of the Senate Finance Committee
FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations
RE: Senate Bill 458 – Health Occupations - Structural Racism Training
POSITION: Support

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 458.

SB 458 requires health care professionals to complete a training in structural racism before their license may be renewed, in addition to completing a training in implicit bias (already required by Maryland law). This bill represents important steps toward addressing health disparities among Marylanders. By expanding requirements for implicit bias training to include structural racism, we acknowledge both the history of discrimination in healthcare and the fact that structural inequities related to race persist today through disparities in the distribution of wealth, availability of resources, and power.¹ Training on structural racism will equip providers with an understanding of how racism affects health. Implicit bias and structural racism training may allow for certain benefits through culturally relevant care including:

1. Enhanced Patient Care: This training will help healthcare providers to understand biases and acknowledge systemic barriers to optimal health, leading to more culturally competent care for their patients.²
2. Improved Health Outcomes: By addressing structural racism alongside implicit bias, this training can work towards reducing persistent health differences experienced by communities of color.³

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on SB 458. Supporting training on both implicit bias and structural racism is a positive step towards improving health outcomes for all Marylanders.

¹ Egede LE, Walker RJ, Williams JS. Addressing Structural Inequalities, Structural Racism, and Social Determinants of Health: A Vision for the Future. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2024 Feb;39(3):487-491. doi: 10.1007/s11606-023-08426-7. Epub 2023 Sep 22. PMID: 37740168; PMCID: PMC10897090.

² <https://www.qualityinteractions.com/blog/racial-health-equity-healthcare-organizations>

³ Cooper LA, Saha S, van Ryn M. Mandated Implicit Bias Training for Health Professionals—A Step Toward Equity in Health Care. *JAMA Health Forum.* 2022;3(8):e223250. doi:10.1001/jamahealthforum.2022.3250.