



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 18, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building,
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill (SB) 684 – Public Health – Health Equity Dashboard - Letter of Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for Senate Bill (SB) 684 - Public Health – Health Equity Dashboard.

SB 684 requires a “graphic data dashboard” with age-adjusted health disparity data on insurance access, cardiovascular disease, chronic disease, mental health and substance use, cancer, HIV/AIDS, and STIs. The disparity data is required to be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender.

Over the past two years, the Department has worked to develop numerous dashboards to improve data driven decision making and data transparency. The Department is developing a centralized Health Indicators Dashboard (HID). HID will serve as an interactive self-service data portal with access to health data across various measures, segmented by demographics. HID will include measures for monitoring both the State Health Improvement Plan and State Health Equity Plan, as well as addressing other mandated reporting on disparities. The Department will continue efforts underway to partner with the Maryland Commission on Health Equity on identifying measures for monitoring and advancing health equity in the State. All of the datapoints enumerated in SB 684 are planned to be incorporated into HID.

SB 684 requires the dashboard to be updated “at least every 30 days.” Many of the key data sources are not available on a monthly basis. In addition, data validation and quality assurance may take additional time. A quarterly schedule for updates based on the availability of quality data may be more realistic for presenting accurate information to the public. The Department respectfully recommends a technical amendment to the bill to reflect this.

The Department strongly supports the goals of reducing healthcare disparities and advancing data infrastructure and transparency. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura Herrera Scott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Laura Herrera Scott, MD, MPH
Secretary

Attachment

In the Senate Finance Committee:

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 684

(First Reading File Bill)

On page 2, line 12, strike “AT LEAST EVERY 30 DAYS” and insert “**QUARTERLY
REFRESHED ON A SCHEDULE DETERMINED BY DATA AVAILABILITY.**”