



Mt. Washington
Pediatric Hospital

Where Children Go to Heal and Grow

Est. 1922

An affiliate of University of Maryland Medical System and Johns Hopkins Medicine

HB1301

Favorable

To: The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk, Chair
Health and Government Operations Committee

From: Mary Miller, FACHE
CFO, Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital

Date: March 10, 2025

Re: HB1301: Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Program,
and Health Insurance – Transfers to Special Pediatric Hospitals – Prior Authorizations

My name is Mary Miller, and I serve as Chief Financial Officer at Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital, requesting a **FAVORABLE** report on House Bill 1301: Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Program, and Health Insurance – Transfers to Special Pediatric Hospitals – Prior Authorizations

We appreciate the work done by the committee and the state last year to address issues we face in moving patients OUT of the hospital towards a safe discharge. Despite progress, there are still problems to resolve. But those are topics for another day.

For now, we come to you about the barriers to getting children INTO our hospital, and about how reducing these barriers can be a part of the state's efforts to address pediatric overstay. This bill picks up one element of last year's bill. It prohibits the use of prior authorization for transfers into Mt. Washington.

These delays happen because we are waiting for insurance companies to issue a prior authorization. Without this authorization, we risk receiving no payment – zero – for the entire inpatient stay.

We have met with the MCO and Commercial payers to ask them to voluntarily end the requirement for prior authorization. Four of the nine MCO's have done so; none of the commercial payers have. During Covid all MCO prior authorization requirements were waived. Every single one of the admissions without prior authorization were later confirmed to be appropriate. Not a single one was later denied. The system can work.

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and by Commission on Accreditation
of Rehabilitation Facilities

mwph.org

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240-677-1850 (outpatient)

We know that acute care hospitals struggle with pediatric overstays. Some unnecessary overstays can be reduced if patients can move from acute care to our pediatric specialty care without delays caused by unneeded insurance company paperwork.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and for your support of this vulnerable population of Maryland's children. We respectfully request a favorable committee report on HB1301.