



Leading Radiology Forward

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TO: The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair
The Honorable Bonnie Cullison, Vice Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Steve Forthuber, President Eastern Operations

DATE: February 6, 2025

RE: **Favorable:** House Bill (HB) 666 -- *Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance – Required Coverage for Calcium Score Testing*

RadNet leads the nation in outpatient diagnostic imaging services with nearly 400 centers in eight states. RadNet has a major presence in Maryland and our Eastern Operations are headquartered in Baltimore. You may know us locally as Advanced Radiology, Community Radiology Associates, and American Radiology Associates with over 60 imaging centers throughout the state. RadNet offers state-of-the-art imaging-based cancer and other preventive health screenings and works to break down the barriers so that all Marylanders have access to these services.

HB666 would require certain health insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations to cover calcium score testing for individuals who have at least three of the following four risk factors: (1) diabetes, (2) high blood pressure, (3) high cholesterol, or (4) a family history of premature coronary artery disease. The bill would take effect on January 1, 2026.

Heart disease is the leading cause of mortality in the United States accounting for nearly 700,000 deaths annually. Coronary heart disease is the most common type of heart disease and has the highest mortality rate in Maryland. High blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking are significant risk factors for heart disease. Nationally, approximately 47 percent of Americans have at least one of these three risk factors. Nearly 58 percent of Black adults have high blood pressure, often starting at a younger age and being less well-controlled. Hispanics Americans face higher risks for conditions like diabetes and obesity, which contribute to cardiovascular disease

Coronary Artery Calcium (CAC) Scoring is a specialized CT scan that measures the amount of calcium deposits in the coronary arteries. These deposits indicate the presence of atherosclerosis (plaque buildup), which can increase the risk of heart disease and future cardiovascular events. The greater the plaque buildup, the higher the risk and likelihood of a heart attack. Unfortunately, insurance coverage of CAC scoring varies leaving many Marylanders having to pay out-of-pocket for the exam which limits patient adoption and access to care.

RadNet supports HB666 because it would expand insurance coverage of CAC scoring resulting in more patients being screened and more future heart attacks prevented. We stand ready to work with members of the General Assembly, its leadership, and other stakeholders to reduce the burden of heart disease in Maryland. RadNet appreciates the opportunity to provide this statement before House Health and Government Operations Committee.