



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

February 19, 2025

Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill: HB 729 - Public Health - Use of Opioid Restitution Fund and Training Under the Overdose Response Program

Position: Favorable with Amendments

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) supports House Bill 729 with amendment. The bill, as introduced, alters the eligible uses of opioid settlement dollars from Maryland's opioid restitution fund (ORF). MML's proposed amendment further aligns the eligible uses of ORF dollars with those in the national settlements, providing the State and local governments additional flexibility.

The ORF was originally established as a mechanism to receive disbursements from pending national settlements involving various actors in the production, distribution, and sale of opioid medication. It was created before the first opioid settlement agreement was finalized and allowed Maryland to be prepared to receive funds from the first, and future, settlements. However, along with the creation of the ORF, the State established eligible uses, as guardrails, for how money from the ORF could be spent by the State and other entities receiving ORF payments.

As the settlements have been completed, they too attached eligible uses to the funds disbursed by the national settlement administrator to the States. Now there are two sets of eligible uses that are not exactly aligned. In fact, the eligible uses in the settlements are now less restrictive than those in the State statute. In conjunction with the bill's provisions on page 3, lines 13-17, MML's proposed amendments align the eligibles uses with those in the settlements and remove any potential conflict with language in future settlements. This in turn provides the State and local governments with more flexibility to spend these settlement funds.

Amendment:

Strike starting on line 17 on page three through line 29 on page 4.



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For these reasons, the Maryland Municipal League respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 729 with the above amendment. For more information, please contact Bill Jorch, Director, Public Policy and Research at billj@mdmunicipal.org. Thank you for your consideration.

The Maryland Municipal League uses its collective voice to advocate, empower and protect the interests of our 160 local governments members and elevates local leadership, delivers impactful solutions for our communities, and builds an inclusive culture for the 2 million Marylanders we serve.

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