



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB519: Public Health - Hospitals - Parking for Patients

Health and Government Operations

February 12th, 2025: 1:00 PM

Madam Chair, Madam Vice-Chair, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. For the record, I am Delegate Matthew Schindler, and I am here to express my strong support for House Bill 519.

HB519 would require hospitals in Maryland to provide free parking for patients receiving inpatient or outpatient care for the duration of their visit. While current parking fees may seem minimal—a few dollars for an hour—these costs can quickly add up, especially for patients requiring extended hospital stays or multiple visits in a short period. The average cost to park for a full day is \$10, adding yet another financial strain on patients already juggling expenses like copays, and lost wages.

At a time when the cost of living continues to rise, Marylanders should not face an added burden simply for accessing necessary, and often lifesaving, medical care. This issue disproportionately affects our most vulnerable populations—low-income individuals, those with chronic illnesses, and elderly patients—who already bear the brunt of high medical costs. In 2020, the average out-of-pocket healthcare spending for privately insured Marylanders was \$5,732 per capita.¹ Adding parking fees on top of these expenses only deepens the financial strain.

By eliminating parking costs, HB519 would provide permanent relief to Maryland patients, ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent access to essential hospital services. Patients should be able to focus on their health and recovery—not on how long they have been parked in the parking garage.

¹ Maryland Health Care Commission, Spending and Use Among Maryland's Privately Insured, 2020.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on HB519. Thank you.