

SAMUEL I. "SANDY" ROSENBERG
Legislative District 41
Baltimore City

Health and Government Operations
Committee

Chair

Health Occupations and
Long-Term Care Subcommittee

House Chair

Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Respond to Office Indicated

□ *Annapolis Office*
The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 365
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3297 · 301-858-3297
800-492-7122 Ext. 3297
Samuel.Rosenberg@house.state.md.us

□ *District Office*
4811 Liberty Heights Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21207
410-664-2646

Testimony of Delegate Samuel I. Rosenberg
Before the Health and Government Operations Committee

In Support of

House Bill 729

**Public Health – Use of Opioid Restitution Fund and Training Under the Overdose
Response Program**

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

According to a Baltimore Banner article from earlier this month, preliminary data from the State showed a 38% decrease in fatal overdoses to about 1,550, the fewest since 2015. However, this number is still much too high, and racial disparities continue to be a problem.

As Governor Moore has stated, “[w]e are still losing far too many of our loved ones and neighbors to preventable overdoses, and we will not let up in our efforts to meet people where they are and make connections to care.” The State’s press release noted that older Black men and younger Hispanic people died at disproportionately high rates. That is why I introduced House Bill 729—so that we can continue our positive momentum in overdose treatment while ensuring that every person, regardless of race, is treated with the care and respect that they deserve.

House Bill 729 clarifies the allowable uses for the Opioid Restitution Fund to better align the language of our law with the National Settlement Agreement. The bill paves the way for improved care for Marylanders suffering from opioid overdoses, ensuring that training for first responders of these overdoses emphasizes compassionate care.

Part of providing compassionate care means addressing racial disparities which persist in our response to overdoses. To address these disparities, HB 729 would direct funds from the Opioid Restitution Fund toward direct efforts to combat this problem. While we have made substantial progress in fighting the opioid epidemic, we must not leave anyone behind in accessing overdose care and support.

I urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 729.

February 19, 2025