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February 6, 2025

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 666– Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance - Required Coverage for Calcium Score Testing– Letter of Support

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee members:

The Maryland State Advisory Council on Health and Wellness (the Council) is submitting this letter of support for **House Bill (HB) 666- Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance - Required Coverage for Calcium Score Testing**. HB 666 would require the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to provide coverage for calcium score testing to individuals with three major risk factors for heart attack and stroke.

The Council supports HB 666 because of the council's ongoing work to promote evidence-based programs which encourage healthy lifestyles and aid in the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. HB 666 will enhance access to calcium score testing¹ for low- and moderate-income patients who have three major risk factors (diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and family history of premature coronary artery disease) for heart attack and stroke. A calcium score test is a noninvasive imaging using a specialized Computed Tomography (CT) scan of a patient's heart which evaluates the level of calcium buildup in the patient's coronary arteries. This testing is an important tool that physicians use to evaluate an asymptomatic patient at intermediate risk for early detection of coronary artery disease (AKA, heart disease) and determine the appropriate treatment options to reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke. By requiring Maryland's Medical Assistance program to cover the cost of calcium score testing, HB 666 will eliminate a major barrier that prevents many low and moderate income individuals from accessing needed medical diagnostics and care: cost.

For this reason, the Council respectfully requests a favorable report for SB94.

Sincerely,

Teresa Titus-Howard

Teresa Titus-Howard, PhD, MHA, MSW, CCM
Chair, State Advisory Council on Health and Wellness

¹ Neves PO, Andrade J, Monção H. Coronary artery calcium score: current status. *Radiol Bras.* 2017 May-Jun;50(3):182-189. doi: 10.1590/0100-3984.2015.0235. PMID: 28670030; PMCID: PMC5487233.