



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 19, 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 (HB) 798 – Opioid Restitution Fund - Interactive Dashboard– Letter of Information

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the “Department”) is submitting this letter of information for House Bill (HB) 798 –Opioid Restitution Fund - Interactive Dashboard.

House Bill 798 seeks to mandate the Maryland Office of Overdose Response (MOOR), in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Health, to develop and maintain an interactive dashboard that publicly displays expenditures from the Opioid Restitution Fund (ORF). The dashboard will track the allocation of opioid settlement funds across state and local jurisdictions, thereby enhancing transparency and accountability in the efforts to mitigate the opioid crisis.

The Department acknowledges the importance of data-driven oversight to ensure that Opioid Restitution Fund (ORF) allocations are utilized effectively for opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery initiatives. The proposed dashboard will serve as a centralized tool for monitoring fund distribution, program performance, and spending trends, thus supporting informed decision-making for policymakers and stakeholders.

However, the Department notes that implementing SB 589 will require a phased approach to allow local jurisdictions and agencies adequate time to align their reporting structures with the new requirements.

Local governments receiving ORF grants may need to establish or modify internal data tracking systems to comply with standardized reporting, which could present initial administrative challenges, especially for smaller jurisdictions with limited resources. Additionally, while the legislation specifies that ORF appropriations will cover dashboard development, ongoing system maintenance, cybersecurity measures, and technical support, additional resources may be required.

The Department remains committed to assisting MOOR in this initiative and ensuring the successful implementation of measures that promote accountability in Maryland’s response to the opioid crisis.

I hope this information is useful. If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura Herrera Scott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Laura Herrera Scott, MD, MPH
Secretary