

House Bill 1084

Correctional Services – Medication-Assisted Treatment

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Judiciary and Health and Government
Operations Committees

Date: March 4, 2025

From: Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1084 **WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill clarifies State procedures and viable funding sources for medication-assisted treatment in local detention centers. County-offered amendments would clarify the original intent of the bill – reflecting a careful balance to resolve a prolonged and vexing issue. These corrections will help the State reach compliance with at least one of several missed obligations within local detention centers.

Providing services for incarcerated individuals with an opioid use disorder requires resources and efficiency. Counties and local detention center wardens agree these services deserve priority in funding and delivery, particularly as they serve such a vulnerable population. State and county stakeholders have labored for six years to properly support sustainable program funding, but one consensus has been resoundingly clear – the required State support has not been effectively provided. The Office of the Attorney General issued a formal letter of advice clarifying that this persistent lack of funding from the State converts the statutory mandate to a nonbinding option, which was not the intent of the General Assembly and the many stakeholders in these programs' success.

Local governments believe – after six years of uncertainty and resistance from State agencies – the General Assembly needs to address the funding challenges that have hindered implementation and State compliance. While MACo has requested this bill, the amendments proposed simply clarify certain elements that were missed in the drafting but are outlined below:

- the current required medications will not change;
- the Special Secretary and Maryland Office of Overdose Response should be listed as the agency responsible for receiving the local cost reports;
- the language that specifies “a grant” will change to “funds” except in one instance to ensure grants are still required to be used where eligible; and
- a requirement should be added that the county shall send the forecasted costs for the ending and coming fiscal years to the Office of Overdose Response each year.

With these amendments, the bill will effectively require counties, during their local budgeting process, to document the needed annual funding for these programs, and submit that assessment to the

responsible state agency. The coordinating state agencies will then be required to braid all eligible funding sources, as outlined in the bill, in order to comply with the state funding mandate to cover the costs of the local programs.

HB 1084 will finally deliver on the long-sought agreement to support critical services to Maryland's incarcerated populations. This bill will connect current mandates to specified agencies and viable funding sources through the use of opioid settlement funds, in conjunction with appropriated funds and eligible grants. The changes will bring long-awaited clarity and compliance for resources to serve these vulnerable populations. For this reason, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on **HB 1084**.