



***Mission:*** To improve public health in Maryland through education and advocacy ***Vision:*** Healthy Marylanders living in Healthy Communities

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**Testimony In Support of SB 494**  
**Maryland Health Care Commission Certificates of Need and Material Change Transactions**  
**Before the Senate Finance Committee**  
**By: Maryland Public Health Association (MdpHA)**  
**February 24, 2026**

Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Hayes, and Members of the Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit supportive testimony for Senate Bill 494. We especially thank Chair Beidle for sponsoring this legislation, which expands the Maryland Health Care Commission's (MHCC's) authority to oversee mergers, acquisitions, and ownership changes across healthcare entities, including non-hospital settings and physician group practices. This oversight will be critical to help protect consumers because private equity ownership in the health care sector is correlated with increased costs and mixed to harmful impacts on quality.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, private equity penetration is increasing in Maryland. A report by MHCC indicated that from 2014 to 2021 private equity penetration increased from 1.8% in 2014 to 15.5% by 2021, and that specialties with the highest private equity penetration as of 2021 were gastroenterology (16.7%), ophthalmology (25.2%), primary care (27.3%), dermatology (36.2%), and urology (63.3%).<sup>2</sup> Private equity penetration was highest in Prince George's County with approximately half of all physicians seen by county residents affiliated with private equity. Increasing transparency and oversight of mergers and acquisitions of health care facilities and physician groups is essential to ensure that Marylanders have access to quality, affordable health care. We urge a favorable report of Senate Bill 494.

*The Maryland Public Health Association (MdpHA) is a nonprofit, statewide organization of public health professionals dedicated to improving the lives of all Marylanders through education, advocacy, and collaboration. We support public policies consistent with our vision of healthy Marylanders living in healthy, equitable, communities. MdpHA is the state affiliate of the American Public Health Association, a nearly 145-year-old professional organization dedicated to improving population health and reducing the health disparities that plague our state and our nation.*

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<sup>1</sup> Borsa A, Bejarano B, Ellen M, Dov Bruch J. Evaluating trends in private equity ownership and impacts on health outcomes, costs, and quality: systematic review. *BMJ*. July 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj-2023-075244>.

<sup>2</sup> Singh Y, Murray R, Reddy M, et al. *Private Equity Investments in Physician Practices in Maryland*. Maryland Health Care Commission; 2025. [https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/plr/plr/documents/2025/plr\\_pe\\_investment\\_physician\\_practies\\_in\\_md.pdf](https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/plr/plr/documents/2025/plr_pe_investment_physician_practies_in_md.pdf). Accessed February 20, 2026.