



MARYLAND TECH COUNCIL

ADVANCING LIFE SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

Senate Finance Committee

February 17, 2026

Senate Bill 496 – *Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Coverage for the Treatment of Obesity*

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland Tech Council (MTC), with over 800 members, is the State's largest association of technology companies. Our vision is to propel Maryland to be the country's number one innovation economy for life sciences and technology. MTC brings the State's life sciences and technology communities into a single, united organization that empowers members to achieve their goals through advocacy, networking, and education. On behalf of MTC, we submit this letter of **support** Senate Bill 496.

Senate Bill 496 authorizes the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to provide comprehensive coverage for the treatment of obesity, including intensive behavioral therapy, bariatric surgery, and FDA-approved medications for chronic weight management. The bill also requires the Maryland Department of Health to notify recipients if coverage is implemented and to report to the General Assembly on implementation status by November 1, 2027. These measures, which are authorizing-only, not a mandate, will serve to improve public health around the State.

In Maryland, nearly 1 in 3 adults live with obesity and are at increased risk of serious health complications, including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and certain cancers. Access to treatment through Medicaid is an important step toward addressing preventable illness and advancing health equity. Maryland's life sciences sector is investing in research and development for treatments and therapies for many serious health conditions and diseases. By expanding access to these treatments, Maryland can improve patient outcomes, reduce long-term health care costs associated with unmanaged chronic disease, and support residents' overall quality of life.

Supporting obesity treatment helps to support the robust health and life science research sector in Maryland. Resources dedicated to obesity treatment support continued innovation in pharmaceuticals, medical devices, digital health tools, and community-based care models developed by Maryland companies and research institutions. In addition, this bill helps create and sustain high-quality jobs, attracting investment and reinforcing Maryland's leadership in biotechnology. Predictable coverage and demand for obesity care incentivize clinical trials, data partnerships, and research collaborations across the state.

Investing Medicaid resources into obesity related healthcare builds a stronger, steadier workforce and that stability fuels lasting economic growth in communities across the state. MTC requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 496.

For more information call:

Andrew G. Vetter

J. Steven Wise

Danna L. Kauffman

Christine K. Krone

410-244-7000