



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Sponsor Testimony

HB882 - Consumer Health Information – Termination Date and Mandatory Funding for the State’s Consumer Health Information Hub – Repeal

Delegate Aaron Kaufman

Good morning Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the committee, my name is Delegate Aaron Kaufman, and I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 882 Consumer Health Information - Termination Date and Mandatory Funding for the State's Consumer Health Information Hub - Repeal. Maryland has made nation-leading investments in clear health communication. In 2022, Madame Speaker Pēna-Melnyk established the Maryland Consumer Health Information Hub through HB1082 to advance health literacy, plain language, and language access statewide. The Hub, housed at the University of Maryland’s Horowitz Center for Health Literacy ensures people can find and understand health information.

In just two and a half years, the Hub has strengthened relationships with state agencies, local health departments, and community organizations across Maryland. It has developed practical tools such as the Maryland Plain Language Checklist, web content review tools, criteria for grants and media campaigns, and a Plain Language and Language Access Action Planning Guide. It also created the



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Maryland Health Literacy Organizational Seal Program, recognizing agencies that institutionalize clear communication standards.

The Hub supports the public health workforce directly. It provides health literacy training for community health workers to reduce misinformation and distrust, address cultural and linguistic barriers, and help residents navigate complex health systems. It offers webinars, convenings, and peer collaboration spaces so agencies can share best practices and modernize communication tools.

As documented in the 2025 Maryland Legislature Report submitted by the Hub, the impact of this work is measurable and statewide. Since July 2024 alone, the Hub has engaged more than 116 Maryland agencies and organizations and participated in over 160 community meetings and outreach events across the state. Ninety webinar participants demonstrated statistically significant increases in knowledge of health literacy and plain language practices, with average scores rising from 2.6 to 3.6 on a five-point scale. Seventy-four professionals representing all 24 jurisdictions attended statewide convenings, reporting increased confidence in implementing Maryland's Plain Language Standards. Additionally, 83 community health workers completed specialized communication training to better support residents navigating complex health systems. This data reflects concrete, measurable improvements in Maryland's public health communication infrastructure.

State and local partners have emphasized that implementing plain language as a routine way of operating requires leadership support, coordination, and sustained infrastructure. This bill ensures that the

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Hub remains in statute beyond the current sunset date, allowing Maryland to continue institutionalizing clear communication statewide. It also removes the mandatory appropriation requirement, providing fiscal flexibility while preserving annual reporting and oversight.

This legislation does not expand regulatory authority. It sustains a communication infrastructure that improves transparency, strengthens public trust, supports language access, and advances Maryland's broader public health goals.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report.