

February 20, 2026

**Testimony of Becky Miller, CEO, Hospice of the Chesapeake
In Support of Senate Bill 611
Senate Finance Committee**

Chair Beidle and members of the Senate Finance Committee.

My name is Becky Miller, and I am the CEO of Hospice of the Chesapeake. We respectfully urge a favorable report on SB611.

Our organization is the largest independent not-for-profit provider in Maryland offering hospice and palliative care services in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, and Prince George's counties. We serve many Maryland Medicaid beneficiaries who would otherwise spend their final days in high-cost hospital settings rather than in environments best suited to address their holistic needs.

One of the most significant barriers to expanding residential hospice access is the lack of Medicaid reimbursement for hospice residential room and board. While hospice services are covered, the residential room and board components are not reimbursed.

As a result, patients who qualify for hospice and do not have the resources to afford room and board fees at a facility are frequently left with no option but placement in rehabilitation facilities (this is paid by Medicaid) or simply cannot be discharged from hospitals. They are effectively "forced into rehab" because residential hospice is financially inaccessible. Due to a systemic lack of options and no hospice beds available reality becomes a cycle of continued failure bouncing between rehab and costly hospitals stay. We hope to break this cycle with a more appropriate and holistic way of approaching end-of-life care for Maryland Medicaid beneficiaries.

SB611's study represents a necessary and pragmatic first step toward understanding how Medicaid reimbursement for room and board in hospice houses could improve hospice length of stay, reduce unnecessary burdensome transitions back to acute care, decrease hospital deaths, and quantify potential Medicaid savings associated with expanded hospice utilization.

This bill does not mandate a policy change — it calls for data, clarity, and responsible analysis.

We urge a favorable report on SB611. Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Miller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Becky Miller, CEO
Hospice of the Chesapeake