



BRANDON M. SCOTT  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**SB 0561**

February 24, 2026

**TO:** Members of the Senate Finance Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** Senate Bill 561: Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Community Violence Prevention 2 Services – Reimbursement and Provision of Services

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 561.

SB 561 would allow community violence prevention organizations to be able to be reimbursed through the Maryland Medical Assistance Program regardless of the location at which the services were provided, remove requirements outlined in HB 1005/SB 350 that community violence prevention organizations maintain affiliations with a hospital or trauma center in order to be eligible for reimbursement, and expands training requirements for violence prevention workers.

Following President Biden's announcement that Medicaid was eligible to support community violence prevention programs in 2021, in 2023 Maryland became one of the first states to pass legislation making these services eligible for reimbursement. We are at the front lines in treating violence as a public health epidemic. However, eligibility for reimbursement is currently limited and does not cover the full breadth of the community violence intervention ecosystem. SB 561 builds on that foundation to expand eligibility to programs that are actively helping drive down violence in Baltimore and across Maryland by doing neighborhood-based violence intervention work and offering conflict mediation hotlines.

While American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars and federal grants previously helped support this work, community violence prevention programs across the country are facing significant funding gaps. Expanding Medicaid eligibility to help cover the costs of these programs would help ensure this work that is making a difference is able to continue and grow to meet the needs of our communities.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on SB 561.