



FEBRUARY 17, 2026

Ensure Collaborative Problem Solving at Maryland Hospitals

Position Statement in Support of Senate Bill 411

Given before the Finance Committee

Maryland hospitals are facing a crisis of long emergency department wait times and stay durations, and evidence shows that inadequate staffing is an important contributor. Open communication and collaborative problem-solving, including the front-line workers who experience the impacts of understaffing first-hand, are critical to solving these problems. Senate Bill 411 would create these structures, and similar legislation passed the House of Delegates last year. **For these reasons, the Maryland Center on Economic Policy supports Senate Bill 411.**

- As of 2024, Maryland had the nation's longest emergency department wait times.ⁱ
- The Maryland Health Services Commission has identified understaffing as an important contributor to long wait times.
- Understaffing leads to poor working conditions and high turnover, creating a vicious cycle.
- Other states have seen successful outcomes from implementing safe staffing committee policies.ⁱⁱ

For these reasons, the Maryland Center on Economic Policy respectfully asks that the Finance Committee make a favorable report on Senate Bill 411.

ⁱ See Sam Williamson, favorable testimony on House Bill 905 of 2025, https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/cmte_testimony/2025/hgo/1dqvWKgzXFoowCfxcx9sbU3g6ybAqNZyP.pdf

ⁱⁱ See Johnine Gunsalus, favorable testimony on House Bill 905 of 2025, https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/cmte_testimony/2025/hgo/13GCseoblMINjnJoUnY8uibouM9s-IIVi.pdf