



Senate Bill 494

Date: February 24, 2026

Committee: Finance

Position: Unfavorable

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber) is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners, and we work to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

House Bill 981 (HB 981) would expand the oversight authority of the Maryland Health Care Commission by establishing new notification and review requirements for certain “material change transactions” involving health care entities, including mergers, acquisitions, and other changes in ownership or control. The bill also modifies existing Certificate of Need exemptions and authorizes the Commission to assess whether covered transactions are consistent with the public interest.

We appreciate the intent of the bill to increase transparency around certain health care transactions and recognize the concerns that have been raised nationally regarding consolidation in the health care market. However, as drafted, SB 494 would create a new and expansive regulatory review process that extends beyond private equity activity and could apply broadly to a wide range of business transactions. We are concerned this additional layer of oversight may introduce uncertainty, delay, and cost for health care providers and other entities operating in Maryland, particularly as they navigate an already complex regulatory environment.

Uncertainty around the scope and duration of review may discourage timely transactions that are necessary to maintain access to care, modernize facilities, or respond to changing market conditions. We urge caution against adopting a framework that could inadvertently discourage investment or impede routine and beneficial transactions that support access to care and economic stability in our state.

For these reasons, the Chamber respectfully requests an **unfavorable report** on **SB 494**.