

**TO:**

[Chair Heather A. Bagnall](#)  
and Members of the [House Health Committee](#)  
Maryland House of Delegates

**FROM:**

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**DATE:** March 17, 2026

**POSITION:** SUPPORT

**Testimony in Support of [House Bill 1126](#)  
Health Insurance and Managed Care Organizations – Laboratory Services – Contract  
Providers**

House Health Committee

Hearing: March 19, 2026 at 1:00 PM

Dear Chair Bagnall and Members of the Committee:

My name is Chris Frew, and I am the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of BioBuzz, a platform dedicated to connecting and supporting Maryland's life sciences and biotechnology community. Through BioBuzz, we work closely with companies, entrepreneurs, researchers, and professionals across Maryland's biotechnology, diagnostics, targeted treatment and healthcare sectors to strengthen collaboration and help grow our state's life sciences ecosystem. I am writing in favor of House Bill 1126.

Maryland is widely recognized as one of the leading biotechnology hubs in the United States. Our life sciences ecosystem includes research institutions, biotechnology companies, diagnostic laboratories, and a highly skilled workforce working to advance medical innovation and improve patient care. Maintaining that leadership requires policies that support innovation, competition, and the ability of emerging companies to bring new technologies to patients.

Independent and emerging diagnostic laboratories often drive innovation in areas such as molecular diagnostics, genomic testing, and precision medicine. Many of the newest diagnostic tools originate from smaller, specialized laboratories developing technologies that may not yet exist within larger legacy laboratory systems. When these innovative laboratories are excluded from participation opportunities within healthcare networks, physicians and patients may have limited access to newer diagnostic approaches that could improve clinical outcomes.

Limited access to advanced diagnostic testing can also increase long-term healthcare costs. Delays in accurate diagnosis often lead to prolonged treatment cycles, repeat testing, preventable hospitalizations, and inappropriate therapies. Research has shown that timely diagnostic testing can reduce hospitalizations by up to 40 percent and emergency visits by nearly half. Early molecular diagnostics can also improve treatment selection and reduce inappropriate antibiotic use, an important consideration as the United States faces more than 2.8 million antimicrobial-resistant infections each year.

From an economic perspective, there is also a broader impact on Maryland's biotechnology ecosystem. Many independent diagnostic laboratories are Maryland-based companies employing local scientists, technologists, and healthcare professionals. When these laboratories are unable to participate in networks, testing volume can shift to large national laboratory systems headquartered outside Maryland and operating facilities in other states. In those cases, the associated economic activity—including jobs, investment, and tax revenue—leaves Maryland rather than supporting the state's own life sciences industry.

House Bill 1126 helps address these challenges by ensuring that qualified laboratories that meet credentialing and quality standards have the opportunity to participate in health plan networks on fair and nondiscriminatory terms. Importantly, this legislation does not prevent healthcare systems or insurers from continuing to work with large national laboratories such as Quest Diagnostics or LabCorp. Those options remain available. Rather, the bill simply ensures that additional qualified laboratories—including innovative Maryland-based companies—can also participate when they meet the same standards.

Supporting fair participation helps promote competition, encourages innovation, and strengthens Maryland's position as a national leader in biotechnology and precision medicine. It also helps ensure that patients and physicians have access to the most advanced diagnostic tools available while keeping the economic benefits of innovation within the state.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 1126.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Chris Frew  
Chief Executive Officer  
BioBuzz