

CAROLYN A. QUATTROCKI
Chief Deputy Attorney General

LEONARD J. HOWIE III
Deputy Attorney General

CARRIE J. WILLIAMS
Deputy Attorney General

SHARON S. MERRIWEATHER
Deputy Attorney General

ZENITA WICKHAM HURLEY
Deputy Attorney General



**STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION
OPIOIDS UNIT**

ANTHONY G. BROWN
Attorney General

WILLIAM D. GRUHN
Division Chief

KAREN M. VALENTINE
Deputy Division Chief

PETER V. BERNS
General Counsel

CHRISTIAN E. BARRERA
Chief of Staff

HALEY VAN EREM
Unit Chief

March 6, 2026

To: The Honorable Heather Bagnall
Chair, Health Committee

From: Haley Van Erem, Unit Chief
Opioids Enforcement Unit, Consumer Protection Division

Re: House Bill 1162 – Correctional Services – Medication-Assisted Treatment Funding
(LETTER OF CONCERN)

The Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General submits this letter of concern regarding House Bill 1162 sponsored by Delegate Tiffany T. Alston. House Bill 1162 provides for the reimbursement of legally-permissible costs (i.e., costs that are allowable under the settlement agreements) incurred by counties for the implementation of medication-assisted treatment programs. The Division appreciates the importance of funding for medication-assisted treatment programs in county correctional systems. However, as currently drafted, House Bill 1162 puts other essential opioids abatement programs at risk.

Through opioids settlements, the State of Maryland and its political subdivisions have recovered essential funds for opioid abatement. Maryland's political subdivisions receive 70 percent of the proceeds of most of the opioid-related settlements, in the form of direct disbursement and targeted abatement grants. House Bill 1162 risks depleting the relatively small portion of the opioids settlements that is reserved for state discretionary spending, putting community-based opioid abatement programs funded by the Opioid Restitution Fund (the "Fund") at risk. It also threatens funding for the Opioids Enforcement Unit, whose operations are vital to ensure Maryland continues to recover from additional opioids settlements and litigation. Although providing medication-assisted treatment programs in county correctional institutions is important, the funding provision disturbs the balance that has been struck in the State-Subdivision Agreements that already provides a substantial majority of the proceeds of the opioid settlement funds for spending by local jurisdictions. Additionally, we understand that the

State has made medication-assisted treatment funding available for the counties outside of the Fund.

For these reasons, the Division has concerns. We understand that an amendment is being considered to House Bill 1162 that would resolve these concerns.

cc: The Honorable Tiffany T. Alston
Members, Health Committee