



Managed By LifeSpan

House Health Committee

February 25, 2026

House Bill 965 – *Office of Health Care Quality Stakeholder Advisory Council – Establishment*

POSITION: OPPOSE

On behalf of the LifeSpan Network, the Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association, and the Maryland Association for Medical Adult Day Services, we **respectfully oppose** House Bill 965. House Bill 965 would create a 22-member Advisory Committee tasked with providing stakeholder feedback to the Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) regarding oversight of health care facilities and notifying the Secretary of Health if the Advisory Committee determines that OHCQ has been negligent in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities. The bill requires the Director of OHCQ to select the chair of the Advisory Committee, which would be staffed by the Maryland Department of Health, and mandates public meetings every six months. At these meetings, the Advisory Committee would receive and review OHCQ reports on nursing homes and hospitals and submit recommendations to the Office.

The above-named organizations oppose this bill for the following reasons:

- The bill’s scope is vague and internally inconsistent. While the legislation broadly refers to “health care facilities,” its language frequently narrows its focus to nursing homes and hospitals. Currently, OHCQ is responsible for oversight of 47 distinct industries and programs. The bill fails to clearly define whether this Advisory Committee would apply to all facilities regulated by OHCQ or only a subset, such as nursing homes and hospitals, creating confusion and potential inequities in oversight, especially when not all industries are represented in the membership.
- Representation fails to include potentially affected stakeholders. The reference to a “representative from the long-term care industry” is unclear. In addition, if the scope is broader than nursing homes and hospitals, there is no representation from other programs and industries that may be directly affected.
- The bill unnecessarily duplicates existing oversight structures. If House Bill 965 is intended to focus on nursing homes and hospitals, it largely mirrors the Oversight Committee on the Quality of Care in Nursing Homes and Assisted Living in its purpose, membership, and responsibilities. Creating an additional advisory body would add redundancy without improving accountability or outcomes.
- The bill establishes an undefined mechanism for alleging negligence by OHCQ. The Advisory Committee is empowered to notify the Secretary of Health if OHCQ is “reported negligent,” yet the bill provides no standards, metrics, or due process for making such a determination. This vague authority risks politicizing regulatory oversight and undermining confidence in OHCQ, given the absence of clear, evidence-based criteria.

Rather than creating another advisory committee with unclear authority and duplicative responsibilities, the State should focus on strengthening OHCQ’s capacity by providing the resources needed to effectively carry out its existing regulatory and statutory obligations.

For more information call:

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