



February 6, 2026

**The Honorable Heather Bagnall**  
Chair, Health Committee  
Maryland House of Delegates  
240 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: House Bill 341 - Maryland Commission for Boys' and Men's Health - Establishment**

Dear Chair Bagnall and Members of the Health Committee:

The Maryland State Council on Cancer Control (Council) respectfully submits this letter of concern for House Bill 341 (HB 341), which would establish a Maryland Commission for Boys' and Men's Health within the Maryland Department of Health (MDH).

**Role of the Maryland Department of Health**

The Council acknowledges that the bill places the proposed Commission within MDH and limits its authority to an advisory role. However, members remain concerned that the core duties outlined in the bill—such as reviewing health data, shaping outreach strategies, and making policy recommendations—are functions already carried out by MDH. While a commission may provide additional structure, there is concern that creating a separate advisory body could further fragment public health efforts rather than strengthen coordination within existing MDH infrastructure.

**Targeted Focus on Boys' and Men's Health**

The bill cites documented disparities in health outcomes for boys and men and emphasizes gender- and culturally responsive care. While the Council recognizes that targeted approaches can be appropriate in certain circumstances, members questioned whether establishing a gender-specific commission is the most effective mechanism to address these disparities, particularly given MDH's existing health equity frameworks that address cancer prevention and other chronic diseases across populations.

**Scope and Focus of the Commission**

Although the bill clarifies that the Commission would not implement programs or adopt regulations, its scope remains broad, encompassing multiple health conditions, age groups, and social determinants of health. Council members expressed concern that this breadth may limit the Commission's ability to provide focused, actionable recommendations—especially in areas such as cancer prevention and early detection, where established data systems and programmatic expertise already exist within MDH.

**Lifespan Considerations**

The Council notes and appreciates the bill's requirement to consider population diversity. Nonetheless, members remain concerned that addressing the needs of boys and men across the



full lifespan through a single commission may dilute attention to age-specific prevention strategies that are critical to reducing cancer risk and mortality.

The Council respectfully encourages consideration of whether the goals of HB 341 might be more effectively achieved through strengthened prioritization, coordination, and resourcing within existing MDH structures rather than through the creation of a separate advisory commission.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Taofeek Owonikoko".

Taofeek Owonikoko, MD  
Chair  
Maryland State Council on Cancer Control