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Howard County*

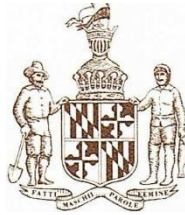
Health and Government Operations Committee

*Subcommittees*

Public Health and Minority Health Disparities, Chair

Elder and Long-Term Care

Maternal, Infant, and Child Health



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**THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB1264** Maryland Medical Assistance Program-Tobacco Cessation

March 3, 2026

Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the Health Committee,

**HB1264** requires the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to cover individual and group counseling to help people quit tobacco, within the limits of the State budget and federal law. It also prohibits the program and the managed care organizations from requiring prior authorization for tobacco cessation products or services.

Tobacco use remains one of the leading causes of preventable illness and death. It is a major contributing factor in the development of heart disease, multiple different cancers, stroke, chronic lung disease, and adverse maternal and infant health outcomes, all of which have disproportionately affect low-income communities that primarily and individuals enrolled in Medicaid. Tobacco cessation treatment, including counseling and FDA-approved medications, significantly increases cessation rates and reduces long-term healthcare costs.

**HB1264** decreases financial barriers to affective smoking cessation treatment by ensuring coverage for both individual and group counseling and prohibiting prior authorization for cessation products and services. This legislation aligns Maryland's Medical Assistance Program with best practices for tobacco dependence treatment.

I urge a favorable report.

*Terri L. Hill, M.D.*