



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

March 4, 2020

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
House Health and Government Operations Committee
241 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: HB 1496 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Emergency Service Transporters – Reimbursement for Transportation and Medical Services - Letter of Information

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Committee Members:

The Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this letter of information on House Bill 779 (HB 779): Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Emergency Service Transporters and Emergency Medical Services Providers - Reimbursement.

The Department recognizes the importance of the issues raised by this bill and the similar bills on this subject, as well as the challenges faced by Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers as they face high volumes of 9-1-1 calls and emergency department wait times that exceed the national average. The Department remains committed to addressing this subject and is currently working in conjunction with the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMMS) and the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) to develop innovative models of care aimed at improving quality and lowering costs for the entire health system.

Should the Committee decide to move forward with this bill, the Department respectfully suggests that the Committee confer with the Appropriations Committee and limit any changes this year to a simple rate adjustment. Any increase in the reimbursement rates will result in a fiscal note in excess of the amount believed to be within the Chair's discretion. Currently, the Department pay EMS providers a flat fee of \$100¹ per transport to specified health facilities. The estimated additional FY 2021 funds required for the bill, as written, are \$3M (\$1.5M GF/ \$1.5M FF) for mileage reimbursement², and \$2M (\$800,000 GF/\$1.2M FF)³ for the reimbursement rate increase.

I hope this information is useful. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Director of Governmental Affairs, Webster Ye, at (410) 260-3190 or webster.ye@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Neall
Secretary

¹ This fee has not been updated since 1999.

² This calculation assumes an estimated average mileage per transport of 11 miles at a rate of \$3.00/miles, totaling \$33 per transport

³ The Department's 2021 blended Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP) is 61.5%.