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**2021 SESSION
POSITION PAPER**

BILL NO: SB 796
COMMITTEE: Finance Committee
POSITION: SUPPORT

TITLE: SB 796 - Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities and Maryland Health Care Commission – Reporting Requirements

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Bill 796 (“SB 796”) requires the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (“Office”) to collaborate with the Maryland Health Care Commission (“Commission”) to publish and provide a report card to include the racial and ethnic composition of all individuals who hold a certain license or certificate, rather than only physicians. The bill requires the report card to include a comparison of certain information. Additionally, SB 796 requires the Office in coordination with the Commission and the Maryland Department of Health, to submit to the General Assembly a certain plan on or before a certain date.

POSITION AND RATIONALE

SB 796 calls for collaboration between the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (“Office”), the Maryland Health Care Commission (“Commission”), the Maryland Department of Health (“Department”) to publish a “Health Care Disparities Policy Report Card” with information on racial and ethnical variations in insurance coverage, racial and ethnic composition of the health care practitioner population, and the racial and ethnic disparities in morbidity and mortality rates for communicable and non-communicable diseases identified as state priorities, such as cancer, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, and cardiovascular disease.

The Commission supports this bill as it aligns with our work to develop and publish more detailed and timely information on healthcare disparities. The Commission believes that reforms to the statute under SB 796 will convey the General Assembly’s urgency about the data gathering and information dissemination on health disparities. The legislation will also enable the respective agencies to examine new approaches to information dissemination and to consider

Note: The Maryland Health Care Commission is an independent State agency, and the position of the Commission may differ from the position of the Maryland Department of Health.

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
March 3, 2021
Page 2

new composite metrics that reflect the interplay of housing, nutrition, and transportation issues on health disparities.

For these reasons, the Commission urges a favorable report on SB 796.

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