



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: Senate Bill 172 - Maryland Health Equity Resource Act

SPONSOR: Senator Hayes, *et al.*

HEARING DATE: January 27, 2021

COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 172 - Maryland Health Equity Resource Act** which will create and fund Health Equity Resource Communities across the State, qualifying such are for tax credits, grants, and health care provider loans repayment assistance to incentivize health care providers to set up or extend services in poor and rural communities.

It is unconscionable that there are such large disparities in the kind of health care which Marylanders receive depending on where they live and their socio-economic status. The Health Equity Resource Communities are modeled on a very successful pilot program, Health Enterprise Zones, which improved health care outcomes in five communities between 2012 and 2016. One of the areas was Capital Heights in Prince George's County. Capital Heights, where a Health Enterprise Zone produced a net cost savings to the community of \$10.59 million by significantly reducing inpatient stays. And, across the State, the program produced a net savings of \$93.39 million. Unfortunately, the program was not continued despite its clear effectiveness. That is why we must ensure the passage of **SB 172**, to commit ourselves to a program that works, and begin to undo wrongs that we have lived with for far too long.

For these reasons, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 172** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.