



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

March 24, 2022

House Bill 286: Emergency Medical Services - Paramedics - Immunization Administration - Effective Date
Written Testimony Only

POSITION: FAVORABLE

On behalf of the members of the Health Facilities Association of Maryland (HFAM), we appreciate the opportunity to express our support for House Bill 286. HFAM represents over 170 skilled nursing centers and assisted living communities in Maryland, as well as nearly 80 associate businesses that offer products and services to healthcare providers. Our members provide services and employ individuals in nearly every jurisdiction in the state.

Last session, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation that authorized a paramedic to administer flu and COVID-19 immunizations as a part of population health outreach efforts conducted by local health departments and health systems in Maryland. Currently, this authorization ends January 1, 2023. House Bill 286 would allow paramedics to continue administering flu and COVID-19 vaccinations for three additional years, until January 1, 2026.

In our fight against the COVID-19 virus, vaccines work. The vaccines are highly effective in preventing people from getting sick or seriously ill from COVID-19 and in slowing the spread of the virus. The vaccines are the best tool we have as new, more contagious, and threatening variants of the virus begin to emerge.

As we begin to navigate a new normal post-pandemic environment, we must ensure that all Marylanders have access to vaccinations. It is critical that we continue public health outreach efforts to mitigate vaccine hesitancy and increase vaccination rates. Allowing paramedics to administer flu and COVID-19 immunizations is an important component to these efforts. Through September 1, 2021, Maryland EMS clinicians have administered more than 100,000 COVID-19 vaccinations. With passage of this legislation, they will be able to continue this important work.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report from the Committee on House Bill 286.

Submitted by:

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