



Maryland
Hospital Association

Senate Bill 26 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Program, and Social Services Programs – Eligibility and Enrollment

Position: Support
February 2, 2023
Senate Finance Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of Senate Bill 26. Broad based and comprehensive health coverage, including increased access to the state's Medical Assistance Program, is integral to hospitals' ability to deliver high-quality care.

SB 26 would automatically grant eligibility for and expedite enrollment in the Medical Assistance Program for children and adults enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Census Bureau data for 2021 show this bill would help over 60,000 uninsured Marylanders get the health coverage they need and significantly reduce the number of uninsured Marylanders while simultaneously improving health equity. This legislation would also eliminate the administrative work required for over half a million SNAP recipients in Maryland to renew their Medicaid benefits, creating savings for the state.

In addition, this bill would improve other social determinants of health by streamlining utility assistance enrollment, expanding access to electric assistance, and automatically enrolling seniors in SNAP if they qualify for Supplemental Security Income. SB 26 would ease barriers for eligible Marylanders to enroll in support programs and help them achieve optimal health.

This legislation also supports the aims of Maryland's unique Total Cost of Care Model. Under the Model, Maryland hospitals strive to lower costs and improve population health. In addition to treating illness and injury, hospitals reach beyond their four walls to keep people well and improve the health of the communities they serve. The result: hospitals are taking care of the whole person, empowering patients and families, coordinating care among different providers, and addressing social factors that influence people's health.

For these reasons, we request a *favorable* report on SB 26.

For more information, please contact:
Jake Whitaker, Director, Government Affairs
Jwhitaker@mhaonline.org