



COUNCILMEMBER LAURIE-ANNE SAYLES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

AT LARGE

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

March 25, 2024

TO: Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
Chair, Health and Government Operations

FROM: Laurie-Anne Sayles
Montgomery County Councilmember At-Large

RE: SB1071, Hospitals - Opioid Overdose and Opioid-Related Emergency Medical
Conditions - Treatment

I am writing to urge your support for SB1071, Hospitals - Opioid Overdose and Opioid-Related Emergency Medical Conditions - Treatment, a crucial bill focused on reducing opioid-related deaths in our state. With the opioid crisis reaching devastating proportions nationwide, we must take decisive action to address this urgent public health issue.

In Maryland, the statistics speak volumes: from 2020 to 2021, unintentional drug and alcohol-related deaths rose significantly, with no signs of slowing down. Montgomery County witnessed a staggering 77% increase in youth overdoses in 2022, underlining the severity of the crisis at a local level.

Our hospitals are overwhelmed with individuals suffering from opioid-related conditions, with Fentanyl alone claiming hundreds of lives in just the first quarter of 2023. The scale of this crisis is immense, affecting countless individuals and families across our state

SB1071 presents a proactive solution by mandating hospitals to refer opioid patients to treatment providers, offering a lifeline to those battling addiction and reducing the incidence of fatal overdoses. By advancing this legislation, we can empower individuals to seek the help they desperately need and curb the devastating impact of opioid abuse in our communities.

I implore the Health and Government Operations Committee to prioritize the passage of SB1071, a vital step toward saving lives, combating the opioid epidemic, and building healthier, more resilient communities.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter.

Laurie-Anne Sayles