



## **Senate Bill 311**

*Catastrophic Health Emergencies - Health Care Providers - Definition and Immunity  
(Maryland Health Care Heroes Protection Act)*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

Date: February 2, 2021

From: Michael Sanderson

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 311. The bill creates a reasonable liability protection for health care workers who have acted in good faith to provide care during the recent and ongoing health pandemic emergency.

The ongoing COVID-19 crisis that struck Maryland and much of the world in 2020 has posed considerable public health and fiscal challenges. Maryland's response to this unique circumstance must reflect a proper balance of consideration for individuals, but also for health care practitioners, who have engaged in reasonable conduct while pressed into emergency service but nonetheless may be connected to the virus's spread, or other related outcomes that may trigger litigation.

SB 311 suggests such a balanced approach. Its "good faith" standard offers a reasonable measure to separate substantial claims from other with less merit. Health care workers, including emergency medical technicians, who sought to act reasonably (many of whom are still fighting for their long-term survival) would be spared the uncertainty of a potential wave of COVID-19 lawsuits arising from even the most trivial workplace decisions. These protections would expire after the current health crisis abates.

SB 311 would create a fair standard to prevent health care workers and their employers from a barrage of potential lawsuits. Accordingly, MACo requests the Committee give SB 311 a **FAVORABLE** report.