



Senate Bill 682

Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance – Emergency Medical Service Providers – Coverage and Reimbursement of Services

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Finance Committee

Date: March 1, 2018

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 682 as it helps to meet a critical need to ensure efficient and cost-effective delivery of health care services by emergency medical service (EMS) providers.

SB 682 requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and insurance carriers to reimburse EMS providers for mobile integrated health services and for transports in non-emergency situations.

Generally, EMS providers are only reimbursed for the transport of individuals to hospitals. They are not reimbursed for situations in which they provide care on site but the patient refuses or does not need transport to a hospital. EMS providers must respond to 911 calls and they incur costs for every dispatch. Consequently, because of the current reimbursement system, they respond to thousands of calls each year in which they are unable to recoup the costs of the services they provide. Requiring reimbursements for care provided without transport would help ensure EMS providers are fairly compensated for the services they provide.

Additionally, mobile health services provide a range of community-based care that can help reduce hospital admissions for routine or non-emergency issues, which are a significant strain on hospital emergency rooms. These programs should be incentivized to provide a means for county residents to receive care conveniently in their communities when treatment providers may be few and far between – a particular need in rural communities.

Counties believe SB 682 helps meet important health care needs of residents in their communities and provides a means for EMS providers to deliver that care in a cost-effective and efficient manner. For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 682.