



Senate Bill 710

Health – General – Prescription Drug Monitoring Program – County Health Officer

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Finance Committee

Date: March 5, 2020

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 710 as it would strengthen local health departments' ability to help identify and deter prescription drug abuse and diversion as the state continues to struggle with an opioid crisis.

SB 710 adds a local health department (or local health officer) to the list of people and entities that must receive Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) data for the purpose of evaluating the distribution or abuse of a monitored prescription drug. It also authorizes the PDMP to request a review, guidance, and interpretation of information before it is given to the local health department.

Counties believe the PDMP can be improved by expanding PDMP access to local health departments and local health officers. These officers play a significant role in addressing the opioid crisis in each of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions. Access to PDMP data would enable them to share vital information and best practices with identified prescribers, and increase awareness and improve intervention efforts in cases of patients who may be doctor shopping.

Local health departments play a vital role in protecting public health and providing public health education and would be valuable partners for using Prescription Drug Monitoring Program information. For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 710.