



Maryland Community Health System

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HB 450 – Maryland Community Health Resources Commission – Health Care Reform – Safety Net Providers

House Health and Government Operations

February 17, 2011

Support with Amendments

Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports HB 450 – *Maryland Community Health Resources Commission – Health Care Reform Safety Net Providers*. The bill requires the Community Health Resources Commission to identify challenges that safety net providers may face in expanding administrative and clinical capacity to implement federal health reform. The bill requires the Community Health Resources Commission to compile that information into a plan for the State to provide ongoing assistance to safety-net providers.

As a network of federally qualified health centers, Maryland Community Health System has been partnering with the Health Reform Coordinating Council, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Maryland Health Care Commission, and the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission on the implementation of health reform. We are pleased to continue this work by providing input to the Community Health Resources Commission for its study and development of a State plan.

We have recommended some minor amendments:

Amendment 1

On page 2, line 1, after before “PROVIDER” insert “COMMUNITY-BASED”.

Explanation: This clarifies that safety-net means community providers rather than large institutions.

Amendment 2

On page 3, strike lines 6 and 7 in their entirety and substitute “barriers to safety net providers contracting with and billing third-party payers;”

Explanation: This makes it clear that the study is to first identify barriers to third-party billing, which could include the lack of a billing system.

Amendment 3:

On page 3, beginning in line 13, strike “:” through “(ii)” in line 15; and after “sustaining” in line 15 insert “and enhancing”.

Explanation: This makes the plan more general and broader-based.

Maryland Community Health System is a network of FQHCs located in both rural and urban Maryland serving over 173,000 patients at over 70 care delivery sites. MCHS' works to expand access to health care for the uninsured, is a partner with Johns Hopkins Health in Priority Partners MCO, and provides health centers with management services in an effort to contain health care costs. These services include providing technology such a practice management and electronic health record systems, e-prescribing systems and centrally-managed administrative functions such as credentialing, clinical quality and operational performance improvement programs, reimbursement and revenue cycle management.

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