



Maryland
Hospital Association

House Bill 547- Hospitals – Price Transparency – Requirements and Funds

Position: *Oppose*

February 12, 2025

House Health & Government Operations Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in opposition of House Bill 547.

HB 547 requires hospitals to comply with federal price transparency rules, while imposing additional state-specific requirements. The federal price transparency rules have been critical to ensure patients have access to credible information to help them make informed health care decisions. Maryland hospitals understand the value of price transparency for empowering patients and have adhered to these rules since they took effect in 2021.

The proposed legislation, although clear in its intent to enhance accountability and consumer protection, has duplicative provisions that might create unnecessary regulatory burdens without providing any meaningful benefits for patients. We are also concerned that some of the bill's provisions differ from federal regulations, thereby inviting confusion among providers and patients. Similarly, while the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) already enforces several oversight mechanisms to ensure compliance by hospitals, this legislation creates requirements for additional state-level enforcement corrective measures and/or penalties for violations. The proposed timelines and processes for monitoring also seem to differ from federal standards.

Hospitals in Maryland operate on a global budget model wherein the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) sets hospital rates for all payers. As such, hospitals do not negotiate different rates with different payers and cannot engage in any price discrimination. This unique rate-setting system already ensures a high level of price transparency and cost control in Maryland compared to other states. This model also ensures that all patients can access any Maryland hospital regardless of their ability to pay or insurance status.

For these reasons, we request an unfavorable report on HB 547.

For more information, please contact:

Jake Whitaker, Assistant Vice President, Government Affairs & Policy

Jwhitaker@mhaonline.org