



Maryland
Hospital Association

**Senate Bill 611 - Maryland Department of Health - Study on Maryland Medical Assistance
Program Reimbursement of Hospice Room and Board Services**

Position: *Support*
February 24, 2026
Senate Finance Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of Senate Bill 611 with Sponsor amendments.

MHA supports SB 611 because it advances a more equitable and compassionate process for supporting end-of-life care by directing the Maryland Department of Health to study the impact of requiring Medicaid reimbursement for room and board in hospice houses. This is an important step forward in closing this parity gap.

Ensuring Marylanders have access to high-quality hospice care not only provides patients and families with dignity and comfort, but can also help hospitals decrease length of stay, avoid emergency department and hospital utilization, reduce the risk of readmission, and provide a more appropriate level of care in a therapeutic setting.

Additionally, the goal of the legislation aligns with the AHEAD Model. As Maryland transitions to this new payment model, it is important to evaluate the utilization of non-hospital care to ensure patients are receiving the right level of care in the right setting. For example, sometimes patients who would benefit from care in a hospice house are transferred to a skilled nursing facility instead solely because Medicaid will cover the expense of the skilled nursing facility bed but not the hospice bed. That skilled nursing facility bed is then no longer available for patient boarding in a hospital who needs that level of care.

We appreciate the Sponsor bringing this important and timely bill forward. This study will provide insight to ensure reimbursement is not serving as a barrier to patients receiving care in the most appropriate and cost-effective setting.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on SB 611.

For more information, please contact:
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