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House Health Committee

March 19, 2026

House Bill 1126 – *Health Insurance and Managed Care Organizations – Laboratory Services – Contract Providers*

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **supports** *House Bill 1126: Health Insurance and Managed Care Organizations – Laboratory Services – Contract Providers*. This legislation is an important step toward protecting patient access to medically necessary diagnostic testing by ensuring that patients and their physicians are not restricted to a narrow network of contracted laboratories. As introduced, House Bill 1126 prohibits insurers and managed care organizations from limiting a patient’s ability to select a laboratory and from excluding qualified laboratories willing to meet plan terms.

From a clinical perspective, timely and appropriate diagnostic testing is essential to accurate diagnosis, treatment decisions, and continuity of care. Physicians frequently rely on independent and specialized laboratories that offer unique or highly specialized tests, which are not always available through large national laboratories contracted by Medicaid or commercial insurers. Restricting access to these laboratories can delay diagnosis, limit clinical options, and ultimately compromise patient outcomes.

Independent laboratories also play a critical role in fostering innovation, expanding access to testing, and serving underserved or rural communities. Preserving patient and physician choice in laboratory services ensures that care decisions remain driven by medical necessity and not by limited contracting arrangements. By preventing unnecessary barriers to laboratory services, this bill helps ensure that Maryland patients receive the right test, at the right time, from the most appropriate provider. MedChi urges a favorable vote.

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