



The Maryland State Medical Society  
1211 Cathedral Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201-5516  
410.539.0872  
Fax: 410.547.0915  
1.800.492.1056  
www.medchi.org

American Academy of Pediatrics  
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Maryland Chapter



MID-ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS  
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4483-B Forbes Boulevard  
Forbes Center Building II  
Lanham, Maryland 20706



(301) 577-0097  
Fax (301) 577-4789  
www.machc.com

TO: The Honorable Thomas M. Middleton, Chair  
Members, Senate Finance Committee  
The Honorable Richard S. Madaleno, Jr.

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman  
Richard A. Tabuteau

DATE: March 7, 2018

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 835 – *Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Collaborative Care Pilot Program*

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On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society, the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers, we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 835.

Senate Bill 835 establishes a four-year Collaborative Care Pilot Program under the Medicaid program. The pilot would be administered by the Department and include three primary care sites that serve a large number of Medicaid enrollees. The Department would provide funding to the sites to develop the infrastructure, training and staffing for care management, and psychiatric consultation provided under a collaborative care model; and establish mechanisms to evaluate the collaborative care model. The Department would be required to collect outcomes data on recipients of health care under the pilot program in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the collaborative care model and determine whether to implement the collaborative care model statewide in primary care settings that provide health care services to Medicaid recipients.

Maryland continues to face challenges effectively integrating somatic and behavioral health care services. Access to behavioral health care services and the lack of adequate behavioral health service infrastructure remains a concern that is reflected in almost all health policy and delivery system design deliberations. Collaborative care has become a model of health care delivery that shows great promise to achieve the objectives necessary to ensure appropriate and well-integrated access to behavioral health services. The establishment of a pilot program will enable the State to evaluate the effectiveness and health outcomes associated with the collaborative care model before expending the resources that would be required to implement a statewide program. It is both a creative and responsible approach to evaluating a possible solution to somatic and behavioral health integration. A favorable report is requested.

**For more information call:**

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman  
Richard A. Tabuteau  
410-244-7000