



**Maryland
Public Health
Association**

Mission: To improve public health in Maryland through education and advocacy

Vision: Healthy Marylanders living in Healthy Communities

**Maryland Public Health Association Supported Bills
2017 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

January 11 - April 10, 2017

***Indicates MdPHA Priority Bills for 2017**

Bills Passed and Signed by the Governor or Enacted

Hydraulic Fracturing Ban*

[HB1325](#): Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo; Passed in House

[SB740](#): Senator Zirkin; Passed in Senate

This bill prohibits engaging in the hydraulic fracturing of a well for the exploration or production of oil or natural gas in the State; repealing a provision of law that requires the Department of the Environment to adopt specified regulations; and repealing a provision of law that prohibits the Department from issuing a specified permit until October 1, 2017.

MdPHA Priority: Fracking and related activities in neighboring states are associated with increases in asthma attacks, adverse birth outcomes, and other illnesses; we have an opportunity this session to prevent harm from this industry in Maryland.

Prescription Drug Affordability (Price Gouging)*

[HB631](#): Speaker Mike Busch; Passed in House

[SB415](#): The President; Passed in Senate

This bill prohibits a manufacturer or wholesale distributor from engaging in price gouging in the sale of an essential off-patent or generic drug; establishes that it is not a violation of a specified provision of the Act for a wholesale distributor to increase a price of an essential off-patent or generic drug under specified circumstances; authorizes the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to notify the Attorney General of an increase in the price of an essential off-patent or generic drug under specified circumstances.

MdPHA Priority: The skyrocketing costs of prescription drugs contributes significantly to an already burdened health care system. We must address these costs to ensure that these life-saving medicines are available to all Marylanders.

Keep the Door Open Act* (note: this was rolled into the HOPE Act)

[HB580](#): Delegate Hayes; Died in House

[SB476](#): Senator Guzzone; Passed in Senate

This bill helps improve access to community-based behavioral health treatments for Maryland residents. It requires, except under specified circumstances, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to adjust the rate of reimbursement for community providers each fiscal year by the rate adjustment included in the State budget for that fiscal year; requiring, on or before December 1, 2019, and on or before December 1 annually thereafter, the Department to submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly on the impact of the reimbursement rate adjustment on community providers and other specified outcomes

MdPHA Priority: Marylanders affected by mental health and substance use disorders must have high quality and accessible services to meet their needs.

Maryland Health Insurance Coverage Protection Act

[HB909](#): Delegate Pena-Melnyk; Passed in House

[SB571](#): Senator Middleton; Passed in Senate

This bill establishes the Maryland Health Insurance Coverage Protection Commission to monitor and assess the impact of potential and actual federal changes to specified health care programs.

Maryland Commission on Health in All Policies

[HB1225](#): Delegate Lewis, Passed

[SB0340](#): Senator Nathan-Pulliam, Passed

Requiring the University of Maryland School of Public Health, Center for Health Equity, in consultation with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, to convene a new Maryland Commission on Health in All Policies to study and make recommendations to units of State and local government on laws and policies to implement that will positively impact the health of residents of the State; requiring a report of workgroup findings to the General Assembly by January 31, 2018

Bills that did not make it out of Committee, Withdrawn or Unfavorable Reports

Prescription Drug Affordability (Transparency)*

[HB666](#): Delegate Bromwell; Died in House: First Reading House Rules and Executive Nominations

[SB437](#): Senator Conway; Died in Senate: Third Reading Passed with Amendments

This bill requires the manufacturer of an expensive drug sold or offered for sale in the State to file with the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene a specified annual report; establishes the Drug Price Transparency Advisory Committee; requires a manufacturer of an expensive drug to file a notice with the Secretary before increasing a specified price or a specified cost by more than a specified percentage or amount during specified periods of time.

Next steps: There has been commitment by Senator Middleton to build momentum towards making Transparency a priority for 2018.

Health Occupations – Maryland Community Health Worker Act

HB1113: Delegate Lam

SB998: Senator Nathan-Pulliam, Recommitted to Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

This bill establishes the State Board of Community Health Workers; specifies the purpose and composition of the Board; specifies the terms of a Board member; requires the Governor to appoint a new member, within a specified time period, if a vacancy on the Board occurs; authorizes the Governor to remove a member of the Board under specified circumstances; requires the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene to serve as the chair of the Board; requires the Board to elect specified officers from among its members.

Next steps: Continue to work with Del. Lam and Sen. Nathan-Pulliam and other stakeholders for possible reintroduction in the 2018 session

Health Occupations - Dental Therapists - Licensure

[SB1013](#): Senator Conway, Passed in Senate

[HB1214](#): Delegate Cullison, Unfavorable, withdrawn by sponsor

This legislation will authorize dental therapists who, similar to nurse practitioners and physician assistants, will work under the supervision of a dentist as they provide preventive and routine care like filling cavities, placing temporary crowns and simple extractions of teeth. They will bring care directly to underserved people in schools, nursing homes and other community settings.

Next Steps: Continue to work with Advocates for Children and Youth to support this bill and bring dental care to low income and underserved populations.

Use of Medical Oxygen in Residential Dwellings - Smoking and Open Flame Restrictions

[HB600](#): Delegate Kramer; Died in House; Unfavorable Report by Economic Matters

[SB175](#): Senator Middleton; Died in Senate; Unfavorable Report by Finance

This bill prohibits an individual from lighting or smoking specified matters or substances that contain tobacco in a room of a residential dwelling in which medical oxygen is being used and within a specified number of feet of a specified room of a specified residential dwelling; prohibiting an individual from

having an open flame in a room of a residential dwelling in which medical oxygen is being used and within a specified number of feet of a specified room of a specified residential dwelling

Clean Indoor Air Act - Smoke Free Hotel/Motel Rooms

[HB597](#): Delegate Platt; Died in House; Unfavorable Report by Economic Matters

This bill repeals a specified provision of law that exempts specified hotel and motel rooms from the requirements of the Clean Indoor Air Act under specified circumstances.

Polystyrene Food Service Products and Polystyrene Loose Fill Packaging - Prohibition on Sale

[HB229](#): Delegate Lierman; Died in House

[SB186](#): Senator Kagan; Died in Senate

This bill prohibits a person from selling in the State specified expanded polystyrene food service products or expanded polystyrene loose fill packaging on or after January 1, 2018; prohibits specified food service businesses from selling or providing food in specified expanded polystyrene food service products on or after January 1, 2018; authorizes a county health department to impose specified penalties for violations of the Act; requires a county health department to notify the Department of specified violations

Tobacco Control Funding

[HB703](#): Delegate Rosenberg; Died in House; First Reading Appropriations

[SB113](#): Senator McFadden; Died in Senate; First Reading Budget and Taxation

This bill requires \$21,000,000 in funding for fiscal year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter for activities aimed at reducing tobacco use in Maryland

Morgan State University - Task Force on Reconciliation and Equity

[HB1519](#): Delegate Lewis, R; Died in House; Unfavorable Report by Appropriations; Withdrawn

[SB471](#): Senator Nathan-Pulliam; Died in Senate

This bill requires Morgan State University to convene a task force to foster reconciliation and achieve racial equity by taking specified actions; requires the task force to include specified members and consult with specified units of State government; requires the task force to hold hearings at locations throughout the State and invite persons to testify, to study and make recommendations regarding specified matters, and to monitor and evaluate the implementation of specified recommendations using specified criteria

Vetoes by Governor Hogan

Earned Sick Leave "Healthy Working Families Act"*

[HB001](#): Delegate Clippinger; Passed in House

[SB230](#): Senator Middleton; Passed in Senate

This bill requires employers with 15 or more employees to provide employees with earned sick and safe leave that is paid at the same wage rate as the employee normally earns; requires employers with 14 or fewer employees to provide unpaid earned sick and safe leave; prohibits an employer from being required to pay a tipped employee more than a minimum wage for earned sick and safe leave; requires the Commissioner of Labor and Industry to develop a specified model paid sick and safe leave policy for use by specified employers.

MdPHA Priority: All workers deserve paid sick days so that no one faces the impossible choice of providing for their family or taking care of their health or their family's health.

Next steps: Continue working with Working Matters Coalition over the summer/fall and push for a veto override in the 2018 session.

Maryland Nonprofit Development Center Program and Fund - Bridge Loans

[HB1517](#): Delegate Glenn; Passed in House

[SB465](#): Senator Kagan; Passed in Senate

This bill establishes the Nonprofit, Interest-Free, Micro Bridge Loan (NIMBL) Account within the Fund; authorizes the Governor to transfer specified funds by June 30, 2017 to the NIMBL Account

Priorities for 2018

Gun Violence is a Public Health Issue

Gun violence has emerged as a priority among our membership. As APHA states, “The issue of gun violence is complex and deeply rooted in our culture. We must take a public health approach to ensuring our families and communities are safe. We must place a renewed emphasis on improving gun injury and violence research.” We will build new partnerships and strengthen existing relationships with groups working to prevent gun violence in Maryland.