

**House Bill 1225 – Workgroup on Health in All Policies
House Health and Government Operations Committee**

March 13, 2017

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

Consumer Health First is a nonpartisan, statewide alliance of thousands of individuals and 100 organizations. It works to promote health equity through access to high-quality, comprehensive and affordable health care for all Marylanders. We appreciate the opportunity to provide our support with amendment for House Bill 1225 - Maryland Commission on Health in all Policies.

We strongly agree with the basic premise of this legislation to ensure that an informed and collaborative approach is adopted to design and implement legislation and policies within the context of a public health framework. The emphasis on reducing health disparities is, of course, particularly important to Consumer Health First.

Today Maryland has multiple reform initiatives in place designed to address a broad range of public health issues and the collective success of these relies upon the success of each individual effort. Just two examples are the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. This has resulted in hundreds of thousands of individuals who now have access to health care services - some for the first time. And, the State Health Improvement Process has a particular focus on public health and health disparities through Local Health Improvement Coalitions and other means.

A third initiative, the All-Payer Model/Medicare Waiver, has the potential to transform our payment and delivery system. In its design the Health Services Cost Review Commission adopted a patient-centered, or we would say, consumer-centered approach to implementation with a goal of addressing the Triple Aim - one leg of which is improving the health of populations. HSCRC Work Group discussions have identified social determinants of health as a key factor in meeting not only the All-Payer Model metrics, but more importantly, advancing health equity.

That argues for a cohesive and collaborative approach across all agencies that is informed by relevant expertise. This legislation sets such a structure. However, we believe that the consumer voice was initially lacking. We request the following amendment:

On page 4 after line 22,

(X) ONE INDIVIDUAL WITH KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE IN ADVOCACY FOR CONSUMERS

We request your support for HB 1225 with our amendment. We would note that the Senate adopted this amendment on the crossfile. If you have any questions, please contact our governmental affairs representative, Ms. Robyn Elliott, at (443) 926-3443 or relliott@policypartners.net