



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

December 13, 2021

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President of the Senate
H-107 State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House
H-101 State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: SB 501/CH 403 (2020) and HB 998/CH 402 (2020) – Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program (MLARP) for Physicians and Physicians Assistants - Administration and Funding – Final Report (MSAR #12844)

Dear President Ferguson and Speaker Jones:

In keeping with the requirements of the SB 501/CH 403 (2020) and HB 998/CH 402 (2020), the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits the final report of the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians and Physicians Assistants Stakeholder Workgroup.

In compliance with SB 501 (2020), the Workgroup consisted of a diverse group of stakeholders from across various organizations and universities in the State. The recommendations in this report reflect the opinions of the Workgroup only.

MDH does not concur with the Workgroup's recommendations, and in particular, Workgroup Recommendation 1. We respectfully suggest that the Workgroup's recommendations be further explored on this important subject in the 2022 interim for implementation by MDH or further legislative action in the 2023 session.

The reporting requirements of SB 501 (2020) request the Workgroup report on "findings and recommendations, including recommendations on [...] a permanent funding structure for the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program." The Workgroup's recommendations for a permanent funding structure, include (1) a permanent General Fund appropriation and (2) seeking non-General Fund resources to supplement the MLARP Fund.

We do not believe that the State's General Funds should be the primary funding source of the MLARP Fund. However, MDH does support the Workgroup's recommendation to seek non-General Fund resources, such as employer match, grants, etc. and would be willing to discuss a capped state funding match using general funds to augment a diverse funding match composed of employers, board licensure fees, and hospital revenue in order to maximize our federal funding match opportunity.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Heather Shek, Director, Office of Governmental Affairs, at heather.shek@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dennis R. Schrader". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Dennis R. Schrader
Secretary

cc: Jinlene Chan, Deputy Secretary, Public Health Services
Webster Ye, Assistant Secretary, Health Policy
Heather Shek, Director, Office of Governmental Affairs
Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services, MSAR # 12844 (5 copies)