

HOUSE BILL 1663

J1, E4

EMERGENCY BILL

0lr3785
CF SB 1080

By: **The Speaker**

Rules suspended

Introduced and read first time: March 6, 2020

Rules suspended

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 10, 2020

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Government – State of Emergency and Catastrophic Health Emergency –**
3 **Authority of Governor**
4 **(COVID–19 Public Health Emergency Protection Act of 2020)**

5 FOR the purpose of authorizing the Governor to take certain actions as a result of the
6 issuance of a certain proclamation for the duration of a certain emergency; defining
7 certain terms; making this Act an emergency measure; providing for the termination
8 of this Act; and generally relating to the authority of the Governor in a state of
9 emergency and a catastrophic health emergency.

10 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
11 That:

12 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

13 (2) “Carrier” means:

14 (i) an insurer;

15 (ii) a nonprofit health service plan; or

16 (iii) a health maintenance organization.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



(3) “COVID–19” means, interchangeably and collectively, the coronavirus known as COVID–19 or 2019–nCoV and the SARS–CoV–2 virus.

~~(3)~~ (4) “Department” means the Maryland Department of Health.

~~(4)~~ (5) “Health care provider” has the meaning stated in § 14–3A–01 of the Public Safety Article.

~~(5)~~ (6) “Program” means the Maryland Medical Assistance Program.

(b) As a result of the issuance by the Governor on March 5, 2020, of the proclamation declaring a state of emergency and the existence of a catastrophic health emergency or any other proclamation issued under Title 14 of the Public Safety Article relating to the outbreak of COVID–19, the Governor, for the duration of the emergency, may:

(1) prohibit cost–sharing by carriers for ~~disease~~ COVID–19 testing and any associated costs that is conducted based on testing protocols recommended by the Secretary of Health;

(2) order the Department to cover the cost of ~~disease~~ COVID–19 testing and any associated costs, if the costs would not otherwise be paid for by a carrier or another third party;

(3) require carriers and the Program to cover the cost of an immunization for COVID–19 and any associated costs, without cost–sharing, if:

(i) the immunization has been determined by the Department to prevent the disease that is the basis for the issuance of the proclamation; and

(ii) the patient belongs to a category of individuals to whom the Department has determined cost–sharing should not apply;

(4) notwithstanding any other provision of law, establish or waive telehealth protocols for COVID–19, including authorizing health care professionals licensed out–of–state to provide telehealth to patients in the State;

(5) order the Department to reimburse synchronous and asynchronous telehealth services for COVID–19 provided to a patient, without regard to whether the patient is at a clinical site, if the service is:

(i) covered by the Program;

(ii) provided by a health care provider participating in the Program;

and

(iii) authorized under the health care provider’s scope of practice;

(6) consult, as appropriate, with the Department, the Maryland Insurance Commissioner, and the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to develop and implement orders relating to COVID-19 to:

(i) minimize disruption in enrollment in health insurance and the Program;

(ii) facilitate reimbursement by carriers of telehealth services provided to patients in the State; and

(iii) facilitate reimbursement of essential services to minimize the risk to public health;

(7) (i) ~~for the duration of the emergency,~~ prohibit a retailer from increasing the sale or rental price of any good or service to a price that increases the retailer's value of profit by more than 10%, including for the price of:

1. food;
2. fuel;
3. water and ice;
4. medicine;
5. medical supplies and equipment;
6. cleaning products;
7. building supplies and equipment;
8. energy sources; and
9. storage space; and

(ii) publish a list of goods and services to which item (i) of this item applies; and

(8) prohibit an employer from terminating an employee solely on the basis that the employee has been required to be isolated or quarantined under Title 14 of the Public Safety Article.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an emergency measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, has been passed by a ye and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is

1 enacted. It shall remain effective through April 30, 2021, and, at the end of April 30, 2021,
2 this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and
3 of no further force and effect.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.