



# News Release

## Comptroller Lierman Releases Maryland Industry Analysis on Health Care, Highlights Economic Impact and Growing Challenges

*Highlights health care as Maryland's largest industry while cautioning that rising costs and demand pose broader economic implications*

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (April 29, 2026) — Comptroller Brooke E. Lierman today released a new report, [Maryland Industry Analysis: Health Care & the Economy](#), offering a comprehensive look at the state's largest and fastest-growing industry and its complex role in Maryland's economy.

The report was released ahead of a public event featuring Comptroller Lierman, Maryland Department of Health Secretary Dr. Meena Seshamani, and a panel of economic and industry experts who discussed the sector's growth, workforce trends, and the challenges shaping its future.

The report finds that "health care and social assistance" is the largest industry in Maryland, employing approximately 427,000 people, or 16% of all jobs in the state. Health care is the largest industry in 10 counties in Maryland (and one of the top five in every county). The industry accounts for 8% of Maryland's gross domestic product and 13% of total wages. It has also been the state's leading job generator, adding more jobs than any other industry in seven of the past 10 years. Last year, health care created nearly 15,000 new jobs, while all other industries lost jobs or added far fewer.

“Our report makes clear that health care is not just a cornerstone of Maryland’s economy; it is the backbone,” said **Comptroller Lierman**. “Growth in this sector, however, is more complicated than in others. Although the health care industry creates jobs and drives economic activity, workforce shortages, federal funding cuts, and federal policy changes, including stricter Medicaid eligibility criteria and reduced Medicare payments to hospitals, threaten our ability to adequately meet increasing demand. These rising costs present real challenges for families, businesses, and state governments alike.”

The report highlights a rapidly expanding workforce: more than 274,000 Marylanders are employed in health care practitioner, technical, and support occupations, a 21% increase over the past decade. Registered nurses are the largest occupation, while roles such as home health aides, nurse practitioners, and licensed practical nurses are among the fastest growing.

Health care jobs in Maryland generally offer higher wages than the national average, although disparities persist. Median wages for practitioner and technical roles (\$96,000) are more than double those for support occupations (\$39,000).

The report also underscores the demographic makeup of the workforce. Nearly 80% of Maryland’s health care workers are women, more than half are Black residents, and roughly 30% are immigrants, significantly higher shares than in neighboring states and nationwide. These groups are concentrated in the lower-wage support occupations. Further, Maryland’s practitioner and technical health care workforce trends significantly older than national averages.

"Health care is a leading driver of Maryland’s economy and future economic growth, supporting every region of our state," said **Maryland Department of Health Secretary Dr. Meena Seshamani**. "As we navigate new complex federal requirements, which risk disrupting coverage and shifting costs across the system, our priority is protecting access to care while building a stronger, more sustainable world-class health system that works for all Marylanders."

While the industry delivers substantial economic benefits through jobs, wages, and spending, the report emphasizes that health care growth is not necessarily an unmitigated positive sign and that it does not necessarily signal a healthy economy. Health care costs have risen faster than most other goods and services, driven by rising labor and input costs without corresponding productivity gains. Because health care demand is not discretionary, rising costs create a “crowding out” effect, reducing the ability of governments, employers, and individual households to invest in other priorities, such as housing, education, and economic development.

“Unlike most industries, health care spending is not something families or governments can easily cut back on,” Comptroller Lierman said. “As costs rise, they take up a larger share of available resources, and that has ripple effects throughout our economy. It’s concerning that the cost of the exact same health care service is increasing year over year.”

The report identifies both headwinds and opportunities for Maryland’s health care sector. Workforce shortages, particularly among nurses and home health aides, remain a significant challenge, compounded by an aging workforce, federal immigration policy and new limits on federal student loans – all of which may further constrain the supply of health care workers, The Trump Administration’s One Big Beautiful Bill Act, or H.R. 1, makes significant cuts to Medicaid that will result in coverage losses and increased cost burdens to consumers and employers, while also placing additional strain on hospital budgets.

At the same time, the report points to some of the policies Maryland has already begun implementing that offer opportunities to improve efficiency, control costs, and improve outcomes, such as value-based payment models, investments in primary and preventive care, and, as appropriate, shifting patients to lower-cost settings. The report also highlights state investments in workforce development initiatives and the potential use of artificial intelligence to enhance productivity.

The event included a panel discussion with Dr. Douglas Jacobs of the Maryland Health Care Commission, Dr. Morgan Henderson of the Hilltop Institute at UMBC, Melony

Griffith of the Maryland Hospital Association, and Claudia Balog of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. Panelists explored the key drivers behind the industry's growth and the policy decisions that will shape its future.

The full report is available at [MarylandComptroller.gov/reports/research-reports](https://MarylandComptroller.gov/reports/research-reports).

[View the recording from today's event on YouTube.](#)

[View photos from today's ribbon-cutting on Flickr.](#)

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Comptroller Lierman and Maryland Department of Health Secretary Dr. Meena Seshamani discuss health care industry trends and data during a fireside chat centered on the new [Maryland Industry Analysis: Health Care & the Economy](#) report.



From the left: Comptroller of Maryland Policy Research Director Dani DiPietro moderates a panel discussion, featuring Dr. Douglas Jacobs of the Maryland Health Care Commission, Dr. Morgan Henderson of the Hilltop Institute at UMBC, Melony Griffith of the Maryland Hospital Association, and Claudia Balog of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East.



Comptroller Lierman is joined by Policy Research Director Dani DiPietro, Dr. Morgan Henderson, Dr. Douglas Jacobs (left), Claudia Balog, Melony Griffith, and Deputy Comptroller for Policy, Public Works and Investment Ben Seigel (right).

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