

HOUSE BILL 524

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By: **Delegates Nathan–Pulliam, Benson, Bronrott, Burns, Costa, Donoghue, Hammen, Hubbard, Kach, Kullen, Lawton, Lee, Mizeur, Montgomery, Morhaim, Oaks, Pendergrass, Proctor, Stein, F. Turner, and Waldstreicher**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2007

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Workgroup on Cultural Competency and Workforce Development for Mental**
3 **Health Professionals**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities to
5 convene a Workgroup on Cultural Competency and Workforce Development for
6 Mental Health Professionals; requiring the Workgroup to include
7 representatives from certain groups; providing for the purpose and goals of the
8 Workgroup; requiring the Workgroup to develop certain recommendations;
9 requiring the Workgroup to submit a certain report to the Governor and the
10 General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the termination of
11 this Act; and generally relating to the Workgroup on Cultural Competency and
12 Workforce Development for Mental Health Professionals.

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
14 MARYLAND, That:

15 (a) The Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities in the Department
16 of Health and Mental Hygiene shall convene a Workgroup on Cultural Competency
17 and Workforce Development for Mental Health Professionals.

18 (b) The Workgroup shall include representatives from:

19 (1) the Senate of Maryland and House of Delegates of Maryland;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



- 1 (2) the relevant professional licensing boards;
- 2 (3) mental health care provider groups;
- 3 (4) consumer groups with knowledge or experience with mental health
4 care issues or health care for minority populations;
- 5 (5) advocacy groups with knowledge or experience with mental health
6 care issues or health care for minority populations; and
- 7 (6) any interest group or stakeholder with knowledge or involvement
8 in the issues addressed by the Workgroup.

9 (c) The purposes and goals of the Workgroup shall be to examine:

- 10 (1) barriers to access to appropriate mental health services provided
11 by health care professionals who are culturally competent to address the needs of the
12 State's diverse population;
- 13 (2) barriers to licensure or certification of foreign-born and
14 foreign-trained mental health professionals;
- 15 (3) initiatives from other states for the facilitation of licensure or
16 certification of foreign-born and foreign-trained mental health professionals;
- 17 (4) mental health workforce shortages and potential strategies to use
18 foreign-born and foreign-trained mental health professionals to alleviate shortages;
19 and
- 20 (5) options for enhancing the cultural competency of currently licensed
21 and certified mental health professionals.

22 (d) The Workgroup shall develop recommendations regarding:

- 23 (1) the availability of specific options to facilitate the licensure or
24 certification of foreign-born and foreign-trained mental health professionals within
25 the limitations of State and federal law;
- 26 (2) the development of training programs to assist foreign-born and
27 foreign-trained mental health professionals to prepare for and pass required licensure
28 or certification examinations;

1 (3) the development of specific training and educational materials and
2 programs to enhance the cultural competency of all mental health professionals;

3 (4) changes to the current licensing and certification requirements for
4 relevant professional licensing boards; and

5 (5) any other initiatives that will accomplish enhanced access to
6 culturally sensitive and competent mental health services.

7 (e) The Workgroup shall report its findings and recommendations to the
8 Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the
9 General Assembly, on or before November 1, 2007.

10 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
11 July 1, 2007. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30,
12 2008, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be
13 abrogated and of no further force and effect.