



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: Senate Bill 1015 – Task Force to Study Access to Mental Health Care in Higher Education

SPONSOR: Senator Eckardt

HEARING DATE: March 12, 2020

COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 1015** but recommends an amendment to include a member to represent community colleges. The bill, as drafted, establishes the Task Force to Study Access to Mental Health Care in Higher Education to study policies and procedures adopted by institutions of higher education, examine the challenges for those institutions, and review best practices regarding mental health services. The task force will also be charged with making recommendations to address the task force's findings.

The task force established by this bill includes the following members, as outlined on pages 1 through 2.

- (1) two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;
- (2) two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
- (3) two representatives of the University System of Maryland, designated by the Chancellor of the System;
- (4) two representatives of private nonprofit institutions of higher education, designated by the President of the Maryland Independent College and University Association;
- (5) one representative of the Mental Health Association of Maryland, designated by the Board of Directors of the Association;
- (6) one representative of the Maryland Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, designated by the Board of Directors of the Chapter;

- (7) three members, designated by the Chancellor of the University System of Maryland, each of whom is a family member of an individual who is:
 - (i) enrolled in an institution of higher education on the date the member is designated; or
 - (ii) a former student at an institution of higher education with experience using campus mental health services; and
- (8) the following members appointed by the Governor:
 - (i) one psychiatrist; and
 - (ii) one nurse psychotherapist experienced in providing mental health services.

Although this is an excellent makeup of members for this task force, it lacks representation by *all* of higher education in Maryland. Given the large numbers of students served by Maryland's community colleges, this sector should be represented on the task force and contribute to the study, its findings, and subsequent recommendations. Therefore, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive recommends amending this bill to include a representative from the Maryland Association of Community Colleges.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 1015 WITH AMENDMENTS** and asks for a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report.