



Support

SB 324 – Veterans – Behavioral Health Services – Mental Health First Aid

Senate Finance Committee

February 4, 2020

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *Senate Bill 324 – Veterans – Behavioral Health Services – Mental Health First Aid*. This bill requires the Maryland Department of Health to provide Mental Health First Aid training for veterans and their immediate family members on how to identify and respond to signs of behavioral health disorders.

Currently, federal rules from the Department of Veterans Affairs and TRICARE do not permit licensed clinical professional counselors in independent practice to provide mental health services to veterans and their families, exacerbating the availability of providers even as suicide rates among veterans remains high.

LCPCM is very supportive of expanding the availability of Mental Health First Aid training to veterans and their families. This will prove especially helpful for those that either cannot access services through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or are otherwise reluctant to seek mental health treatment.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony. If we can provide any further information, please contact our legislative representative, Rachael Faulkner, at (410) 693-4000 or rfaulkner@policypartners.net.