



Testimony on SB 520
Behavioral Health Programs – Opioid Treatment Services –
Limitation on Licenses

Senate Finance Committee

February 18, 2020

POSITION: OPPOSE

The Community Behavioral Health Association of Maryland is the professional organization for providers of community-based mental health and substance use disorder treatment services. Our members serve the majority of the almost-300,000 children and adults who access care through the public behavioral health system. We provide outpatient treatment, residential and day programs, case management and assertive community treatment (ACT), employment supports, and crisis intervention.

Although we are unsure whether this bill applies to outpatient mental health centers that prescribe medications such as suboxone for individuals with co-occurring mental health and opioid use disorders, we oppose SB 520 because we believe it unfairly targets behavioral health facilities that provide opioid treatment in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Maryland, like other states, is grappling with an opioid overdose crisis. If the crisis were instead an epidemic of the flu we would not be discussing limiting the number of healthcare facilities that could address the emergency. We cannot hope to encourage individuals with behavioral health disorders to seek treatment if our public policies discriminate against the very facilities that would provide the treatment.

For these reasons we urge an unfavorable report on SB 520.