



## **SB 520 – Behavioral Health Programs – Opioid Treatment Services – Limitations on Licenses**

**Committee: Finance**

**Date: February 18, 2020**

**POSITION: Unfavorable**

**The Maryland Coalition of Families:** Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) helps families who care for someone with behavioral health needs. Using personal experience as parents, caregivers and other loved ones, our staff provide one-to-one peer support and navigation services to parents and caregivers of young people with mental health issues and to any loved one who cares for someone with a substance use or gambling issue.

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MCF strongly opposes SB 520.

Opioid deaths continue to soar. In 2018, 2,385 people died of an opioid overdose. While the number of deaths in the first 9 months of 2019 declined slightly from those of the same period in 2018, it was only slightly; there is no reason to let up on treatment efforts.

In the first three quarter of FY 20 MCF served 586 families who were caring for a loved one with a substance use disorder – 270 had an opioid use disorder. These families are desperate to get treatment for their loved one, and already struggle to access the treatment needed. Treatment is a matter of life and death.

SB 520 would have a chilling effect on the supply of opioid treatment facilities for those with the disease of opioid addiction. Stigma and lack of understanding are the impetus behind SB 520.

We urge an unfavorable report on SB 520.

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