



February 26, 2020

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support – HB 1121: Maryland Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Registry and Referral System

Dear Chairman Pendergrass and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) is a state medical organization whose physician members specialize in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, MPS works to ensure available, accessible and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens; and strives through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branch of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland excluding the D.C. suburbs, MPS represents over 700 psychiatrists as well as physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPS supports House Bill 1121: Maryland Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Registry and Referral System (HB 1121) for a readily available online directory of mental health and substance use disorder treatment services would be invaluable for psychiatrists working in state correctional facilities who need to prepare their patients for transition to the community. Community resources vary considerably by county, and no clinician can keep abreast of newly developed programs. Parolees face many barriers upon release, but tracking down treatment programs shouldn't be one of them.

MPS asks the committee for a favorable report on HB 1121. If you have any questions with regard to this testimony, please feel free to contact Thomas Tompsett Jr. at tommy.tompsett@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully submitted,
The Legislative Action Committee for the Maryland Psychiatric Society.