

The Honorable Senator Delores Kelley, Chairperson  
Finance Committee  
Maryland Senate  
11 Bladen Street  
Room 3, East Wing  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairperson Kelley and Distinguished Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for SB 567 on telehealth reimbursement to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Rachel Collins LPCP and I am a Clinical therapist who resides and practices in Baltimore County, MD.

Reimbursement for telebehavioral health modalities is important to me because it is the safest form of therapy for my clients.

We are still in the throes of a global pandemic and the need for health care and mental health services has never been greater. COVID-19 has revealed systemic flaws in our mental health services for providers and clients alike. It is imperative that we remove barriers to life saving services in a responsible and urgent manner.

This bill will update what Maryland health care services the Medical Assistance Program is required to provide through telehealth by broadening the circumstances under which the Program is required to provide telehealth and telebehavioral health. It is critical to update current Maryland code to align with best practices in our field by requiring certain insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations to reimburse health care services provided through telehealth.

While we are working to upload and implement the Counseling Compact in this state and throughout the U.S., this immediate action, removing barriers to critical supports and supporting mental health providers by broadening reimbursements in Maryland, is essential for the wellbeing of residents, families, and a social services system overburdened by staggering need.

I strongly urge you to support SB 567.

Sincerely,

Rachel Collins LPCP  
Stride Forward Counseling  
9 Newburgh Avenue, Catonsville MD  
Rabinowitz Counseling Services, LLC