



Committee: House Ways and Means Committee

Bill Number: House Bill 618

Title: Maryland Parental Rights Act

Hearing Date: February 24, 2022

Position: Support

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) strongly opposes *House Bill 618 – Maryland Parental Rights Act*.

LCPCM was a strong supporter of the adding mental health services to the state's minor consent law. Although behavioral providers always try to include parents when they are working with children, there are times when it may not be appropriate. For example, it may be necessary for LGBTQ patients to be able to initiate services without parental involvement in order to get support the need to come out to their parents. Although this bill does not appear to override the state's minor consent law it does create a one year prison sentence if a provider fails to get parental consent when required. Providers take their responsibility to get parental consent very seriously but a potential criminal penalty will result in many providers deciding to no longer take minor consent cases.

We ask for an unfavorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Scott Tiffin at stiffin@policypartners.net.