



Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

PO Box 36401, Towson, Maryland 21286 ♦ www.mota-members.com

Committee:	House Health and Government Operations Committee
Bill Number:	House Bill 418 - Mental Health - Workforce Development - Fund Established
Hearing Date:	February 21, 2023
Position:	Support

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) supports *House Bill 418 - Mental Health - Workforce Development - Fund Established*. The bill creates a special fund to support initiatives to increase the number of behavioral health professionals. A stakeholder advisory committee would make recommendations on a range of strategies, which could include tuition assistance and support for clinical placements.

According to the Health Services Resources Administration (HRSA), almost every Maryland jurisdiction is now facing a shortage of mental health providers.¹ Maryland needs to focus its resources on alleviating this crisis now, or we will fall even further behind. The bill provides the framework for moving forward with innovative strategies to attract more individuals into the behavioral health profession as well as retain them.

Occupational therapy practitioners are part of the behavioral health team at outpatient mental health centers, in-patient psychiatric units, and in school settings. We are committed to being part of the advisory committee process to advise the Department of Health on comprehensive strategies to address the behavioral health professional shortages.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please feel free to contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

¹ <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/charts/?state=MD>