



Maryland
Hospital Association

February 17, 2023

To: The Honorable [Joseline Peña-Melnyk](#), Chair, [House Health & Government Operations Committee](#)

Re: [Letter of Support- House Bill 322](#)- Public Health – Home– and Community–Based Services for Children and Youth

Dear Chair [Peña-Melnyk](#):

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on House Bill 322.

One in six children in the U.S. are diagnosed with a mental, behavioral, or developmental disorder. Many of these children lack access to services and resources they need to function each day. Maryland hospitals and other health care partners continue to work tirelessly to deliver essential inpatient and outpatient care for Maryland youth.

HB 322 incorporates vital improvements to the existing model for behavioral health care in Maryland. In particular, the bill provides reimbursement for essential wraparound services delivered by care coordinators. HB 322 also requires reimbursement for intensive in-home services, family therapy, and other family-centered treatments. These provisions ensure access to often inaccessible, but much needed, behavioral health services.

Finally, HB 322 requires the Governor to set aside funds in the annual budget to support mental health and behavioral health services for youth. By expanding eligibility criteria and allocating funds for these services, children will be afforded treatment early on and will maintain treatment stability as they grow into adulthood.

With the help of HB 322, hospitals and health systems can collaborate to positively transform the existing behavioral health landscape for Maryland's youth.

For these reasons, we request a *favorable* report on HB 322.

For more information, please contact:
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