



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 8, 2024

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 445 – Maryland Department of Health - 2-1-1 Maryland - Oversight – Letter of Support with Amendment

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for HB353 - Maryland Department of Health - 2-1-1 Maryland - Oversight.

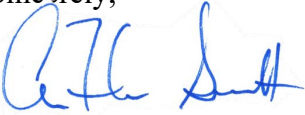
The Department provides oversight to 2-1-1 Maryland as outlined in their Articles of Incorporation and Maryland Statute. This bill further clarifies the Department's role. Under current statute, the Department is charged with evaluating the performance of each 2-1-1 Maryland call center. This legislation places this function back in the hands of 2-1-1 Maryland. The Department has contractual agreements with 2-1-1 Maryland to perform a variety of services and 2-1-1 Maryland in turn has contractual agreements with call centers to perform these services. 2-1-1 Maryland directly contracts with the call centers and is in the best position to evaluate their performance and ensure the work they are performing is aligned with the contractual agreements.

The Department generally agrees with the intent of this bill and respectfully recommends amendments to clarify 2-1-1 Maryland's role. This legislation adds the phrase "*behavioral health care coordination*". Care coordination is a technical term defined by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) as "deliberately organizing consumer care activities and sharing information among all of the participants concerned with a consumer's care to achieve safer and more effective care." Due to the technical nature of this phrase and to further define 2-1-1 Maryland's role, the Department recommends striking the term behavioral health care coordination and inserting behavioral health into the definition of health and human services referral system.

The Department has included proposed amendment language for the Committee's consideration.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "LH Scott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "LH" and the last name "Scott" clearly distinguishable.

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 353
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 2, lines 16 and 17, after “**preparedness**” strike “**and BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE COORDINATION**”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 1, line 24, after “**HEALTH**” insert “, **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**”

On page 2, line 13, after “**health**” insert “, **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**”

On page 2, line 15, after “**health**” insert “, **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**”