



Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Mid-Atlantic States, Inc
2101 East Jefferson Street
Rockville, Maryland 20852

January 30, 2024

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB 212 – Support

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Committee:

Kaiser Permanente is pleased to support SB 212, “Behavioral Health Advisory Council and Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access – Alterations.”

Kaiser Permanente is the largest private integrated health care delivery system in the United States, delivering health care to over 12 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia.¹ Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States, which operates in Maryland, provides and coordinates complete health care services for over 825,000 members. In Maryland, we deliver care to approximately 475,000 members.

In recognition that the Behavioral Health Advisory Council and the Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access have a similar mandate and overlapping membership, SB 212 takes steps to better coordinate and align the work of these two groups. We support this legislation as a mechanism to reduce duplication of effort by staff at the Maryland Department of Health and encourage the General Assembly to identify other opportunities to streamline the work of the hundreds of councils, commissions, and workgroups that touch on the health and wellbeing of Marylanders.

Kaiser Permanente also supports further study about the financing structure and quality oversight needed to integrate somatic and behavioral health services in the HealthChoice program. Individuals with behavioral health needs often experience co-occurring physical health conditions, and addressing these issues in silos can lead to fragmented care and suboptimal outcomes. By incorporating behavioral health services into managed care programs, a more comprehensive and coordinated care model can be established, ensuring that individuals receive integrated services tailored to their unique healthcare requirements.

¹ Kaiser Permanente comprises Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., the nation’s largest not-for-profit health plan, and its health plan subsidiaries outside California and Hawaii; the not-for-profit Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, which operates 39 hospitals and over 650 other clinical facilities; and the Permanente Medical Groups, self-governed physician group practices that exclusively contract with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and its health plan subsidiaries to meet the health needs of Kaiser Permanente’s members.

Kaiser Permanente
Comments on SB 212
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Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact me at Allison.W.Taylor@kp.org or (202) 924-7496 with questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Allison Taylor".

Allison Taylor
Director of Government Relations
Kaiser Permanente