



Maryland Community Health System

Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill Number: House Bill 1351 – Health Insurance - Provider Panels - Credentialing for Behavioral Health Care Professionals

Hearing Date: March 26, 2025

Position: Support

The Maryland Community Health System supports *House Bill 1292 – Health Insurance – Provider Panels – Credentialing for Behavioral Health Care Professionals*. This bill requires that health insurance carriers expedite the credentialing process for certain behavioral health providers, so that an application to participate in the carrier’s provider panel is decided within 60 days for those providers.

Maryland Community Health System is a network of federally qualified health centers providing primary, behavioral health, and dental services to underserved communities across Maryland. The process of credentialing providers with insurance carriers is long, inefficient, and directly impacts both our operating costs and ability to get reimbursed for services provided. In addition, there is currently a severe shortage of behavioral health providers in the state. In 2023, there were an estimated 34,613 behavioral health professionals employed in Maryland, which is only about half of the workers needed to meet the needs of Maryland’s population.¹ While we would welcome a complete overhaul of the credentialing statute, expediting the process of credentialing behavioral health care providers would be worthy start.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

¹ <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:af4896e7-44f6-42d2-8f8d-e8ecd2968c8a>