



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Ryan Moran, Dr.PH, Acting Secretary

March 25, 2025

Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill (HB) 1066 – Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access - Membership and Workgroups – Letter of Information

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this letter of information for House Bill (HB) 1066, Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access – Membership and Workgroups. HB 1066 proposes the establishment of an additional workgroup focused on improving health, social, and economic outcomes related to substance use disorders. This workgroup would specifically examine treatment data, recovery support services, and the intersection of substance use disorder with the criminal justice system. Furthermore, the workgroup would explore the fiscal impact of the criminal justice system on substance use disorders and recommend changes to state laws, policies, and practices aimed at reducing the criminalization of substance use.

As an alternative to creating a new workgroup, the Department believes that these reporting components can be included in the report completed by the Commission's workgroup on Criminal Justice-Involved Behavioral Health, which includes members with the expertise to evaluate and make recommendations on each of the areas currently detailed in HB 1066. The Commission currently uses 12 staff to manage the administrative duties of the Commission and workgroups. Each workgroup needs 2-3 staff to function properly and ensure participation, documentation, and reporting of key discussions and recommendations back to the larger Commission. All Commission staff also contribute to facilitating the bi-monthly joint meetings which include planning sessions, drafting presentations, and ensuring proper documentation and public posting of information in accordance with the Maryland Open Meetings Act. Consolidating these requirements within an existing workgroup would allow the Department and Commission to provide recommendations more effectively. As such, we have provided suggested amendment language below to reflect this alternative.

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 that reads "Ryan B. Moran".

Ryan Moran, Dr. P.H., MHSA

Acting Secretary

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 1066

On page 5, line 19 strike starting with “AND” through line 21.

On page 5, on line 22, strike “(5)” and replace with “(3)”.