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Health and Government
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House Chair
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of HB1474: Licensed Professional Counselors – Telehealth – Students
Enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education
March 25, 2025**

Madam Chair Beidle and distinguished members of the Finance Committee, it is my pleasure to come before you and offer testimony in favor of **House Bill 1474**.

As amended by the Health and Government Operations committee, this bill authorizes out-of-state licensed professional counselors to provide counseling telehealth services to their patients, who are temporarily residing in Maryland while enrolled in an institution of higher education. This exception requires that the student has a preexisting relationship of at least six months with the provider who is licensed in their home state. It does not apply to students who establish residency in Maryland or enroll in a Maryland-based health insurance plan. Providers who intend to use this exception are also required to provide written notice, contact information, and licensing information to Maryland's licensing boards before providing any interstate telehealth services.

Over the past few years, we have signed onto several interstate health compacts, including a Counseling Compact. While some compacts have begun issuing licenses, others have delayed enactment and left many students without access to continuous mental health treatment. Even after the compacts begin issuing licenses, out-of-state students from non-participating states will still be unable to continue their mental telehealth treatment while at our institutions of higher education.

Across the United States, limited-licensure exception policies have been created for various types of healthcare to provide continuity-of-care for patients receiving treatment in states other than the state of their residency. After the COVID-19 pandemic, several states enacted these policies specifically for counseling telehealth services, including Colorado, Connecticut, Idaho, Utah, and Illinois.

We understand that our licensing board has concerns about enacting limited-licensure exceptions, but we have seen successful models in other states and will continue to work with the Board to address their concerns.

This bill passed the House with a vote of 138-0. I urge a favorable report on **House Bill 1474**.