

HB1474 Telehealth for Students in Higher Ed -Suppo

Uploaded by: Annie Coble

Position: FAV

TO: The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair
Senate Finance Committee

HB1474

FROM: Annie Coble
Assistant Director, Maryland Government Affairs

Favorable

DATE: March 25, 2025

RE: HB1474 LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS - TELEHEALTH - STUDENTS
ENROLLED IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Johns Hopkins supports **HB1474 Licensed Professional Counselors - Telehealth - Students Enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education** as amended. This bill allows out-of-state licensed counselors to provide telehealth services to students in state higher education institutions. This would provide increased flexibility and continuity of care to support the mental health and well-being of our students.

Johns Hopkins University takes student health and mental health very seriously. We offer a variety of supports through Mental Health Services' three on-campus clinics, as well as the Behavioral Health Crisis Support Team that provides mobile co-response to our Baltimore-based campuses. Additionally, we have an online resource to help guide students to a variety of university and community resources to support their well-being, the link is: <https://wellbeing.jhu.edu/resources/mental/>. While JHU offers a wide range of services, at times the support and continuity of care available from their existing treating provider is the most beneficial option for their mental healthcare.

Johns Hopkins University has about 17,200 enrolled undergraduate and graduate students, the majority of which are from out of state. Allowing them easier access to the mental health supports and their established providers would be a benefit for them.

Accordingly, Johns Hopkins respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on **HB1474**.

HB1474_DeKaiser_SenateTestimony

Uploaded by: Delegate Kaiser

Position: FAV

ANNE R. KAISER
Legislative District 14
Montgomery County

Health and Government
Operations Committee

House Chair
Joint Committee on Cybersecurity,
Information Technology and
Biotechnology



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 425
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
301-858-3036 · 410-841-3036
800-492-7122 Ext. 3036
Fax 301-858-3060 · 410-841-3060
Anne.Kaiser@house.state.md.us

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**.

ATA Action Letter MD HB 1474 SF.pdf

Uploaded by: Hunter Young

Position: FAV



March 21, 2025

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

The Honorable Antonio Hayes
Vice Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Maryland General Assembly
223 James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: ATA ACTION SUPPORT FOR HB 1474

Dear Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes and members of the Senate Finance Committee:

On behalf of ATA Action, I am writing to you to express our support for House Bill 1474 allowing out-of-state licensed professional counselors to treat college students in Maryland.

ATA Action, the American Telemedicine Association's affiliated trade association focused on advocacy, advances policy to ensure all individuals have permanent access to telehealth services across the care continuum. ATA Action supports the enactment of state and federal telehealth coverage and fair payment policies to secure telehealth access for all Americans, including those in rural and underserved communities. ATA Action recognizes that telehealth and virtual care have the potential to truly transform the health care delivery system – by improving patient outcomes, enhancing safety and effectiveness of care, addressing health disparities, and reducing costs – if only allowed to flourish.

House Bill 1474 allows duly licensed out of state health care professionals to treat patients located in Maryland through telehealth if the patient is a student attending an institution of higher education in Maryland but is otherwise not a resident in the state when not attending the institution of higher education. We agree with and support state policies that provide additional authorizations to allow licensed out-of-state providers to treat in-state patients, particularly for continuity of care purposes where a provider already has a relationship with a patient. We greatly appreciate this commitment to advancing telehealth access, particularly across state boundaries.

This legislation is especially impactful as the transition to higher education can present daunting mental health challenges for students, particularly those leaving their home state. Allowing students to continue seeing the counselor they already have a relationship with via telehealth, without requiring additional steps by the provider, will help ease that transition, promote

ATA ACTION

901 N. Glebe Road, Ste 850 | Arlington, VA 22203
Info@ataaction.org



continuity of care and lead to better patient health outcomes. Furthermore, our organization is supportive of the amendments made to this legislation in the House which removed the potentially restrictive limitations on the number of times counseling services can be provided to the student. We encourage the Committee to advance this legislation with these amendments maintained.

Thank you for your support for telehealth. Please let us know if there is anything that we can do to assist you in your efforts to adopt practical telehealth policy in Maryland. If you have any questions or would like to engage in additional discussion regarding the telehealth industry's perspective, please contact me at kzebley@ataaction.org.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle Zebley", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Kyle Zebley
Executive Director
ATA Action

HB 1474 favorabe (crossover).pdf

Uploaded by: Matt Power

Position: FAV



Support

Senate Finance Committee
House Bill 1474 – Licensed Professional Counselors – Telehealth – Students Enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education

Matt Power, President
mpower@micua.org
March 25, 2025

On behalf of the member institutions of the Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA) and the nearly 55,000 students we serve, I thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony in support with amendments of [*House Bill 1474 – Licensed Professional Counselors – Telehealth – Students Enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education*](#). This bill authorizes an out-of-state licensed professional counselor to provide clinical professional counseling services through telehealth to nonresident students enrolled in an institution of higher education in the State. Currently, out-of-state students cannot continue with their pre-existing provider relationship unless they are physically within the borders of the home state.

The Covid-19 situation adjusted the learning environment for higher education students and came with unprecedented stressors. The Coronavirus pandemic shifted traditional healthcare delivery to allow for the expansion of telemedicine; students could stay connected to appropriate services when in need. During the pandemic, MICUA institutions provided student support services via telehealth. Some of these support services included virtual wellness programs to deal with issues related to depression, anxiety, relationship problems, substance abuse, academic challenges, social pressures, loss, and many others. Telehealth is a good resource for college and university students to access health care providers while they are home.

Becoming a college student invites a myriad of emotions such as anxiety, excitement, confusion, joy, etc. Allowing non-resident students to maintain the behavioral healthcare relationships they had at home would ensure continuity of care and access to services covered under existing health insurance. This would be a substantial benefit to students accessing mental health care services. MICUA institutions appreciate the intended impact and utility of HB 1474.

MICUA supports HB 1474 as amended by the House Health and Government and Operations Committee.

If you have any questions, please contact Irnande Altema (ialtema@micua.org), Associate Vice President for Government and Business Affairs.

For all of these reasons, MICUA requests the Committee support as amended for House Bill 1474.

HB 1474 - FIN - Counselors Bd - Oppose - final.doc

Uploaded by: State of Maryland (MD)

Position: UNF



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Ryan Moran, DrPH, MHSA, Acting Secretary

**Maryland Board of Professional Counselors & Therapists
4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215**

**2025 SESSION
POSITION PAPER**

**BILL NO: HB 1474
COMMITTEE: Finance
POSITION: Oppose**

TITLE: Licensed Professional Counselors – Telehealth – Students Enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education

BILL ANALYSIS: For the purpose of authorizing an out-of-state licensed professional counselor to provide clinical professional counseling services to certain students enrolled in institutions of higher education in the State under certain circumstances.

POSITION AND RATIONALE: The Maryland State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists (the “Board”) carefully considered HB 1474 in its original form and with amendments.

It is understandable that an individual leaving for college would want to receive continued mental health support from a known provider. However, as counseling and therapy professionals appointed by the State to regulate the industry and protect the public, the Board strongly believes that this is not advisable from both a clinical perspective and from the perspective of being responsible stewards of protecting individuals from receiving less than optimum care. As more fully explained below, the Board opposes HB 1474 and respectfully requests the Senate Finance Committee take an unfavorable position on the bill.

All health occupations boards in Maryland have been working with the existing laws regarding telehealth. Even during the COVID pandemic the legislature did not create an exception in the telehealth statute for out-of-state counselors and out-of-state students. During the public health state of emergency, the Board established protocols which it currently maintains to ensure that out-of-state licensed counselors and other mental health providers licensed by the Board are able to obtain a Maryland license with expediency. Passing this bill creates an exception in the telehealth law that, from our perspective, is wrought with administrative and procedural problems and would be nearly impossible to track to maintain compliance.

Good standing status is not enough.

The Bill only requires the clinician to hold a status of good standing in the state where they are currently licensed. The bill does not account for or address any current or past discipline, does not set forth any consequences for failure to notify the Board of teletherapy sessions or other noncompliance, and most notably does not require compliance with Maryland law. Currently, all out-of-state providers are afforded the option to properly credential in Maryland in order to provide services to Maryland residents. This process provides oversight for the care provided in our State and engages the provider with Maryland resources and ensures that we are not providing 'one off' exceptions to exceptional care to those in our State who we have the responsibility to protect. The Board strongly believes that this precedence of allowing students to see out-of-state providers who are not licensed in Maryland will lead to confusion amongst providers and members of the public.

Administrative burden will increase exponentially.

HB 1474 will require the Board to create a tracking or monitoring system. The system will require the Board to collect and verify specific licensing information relating to the out-of-state counselor, specific information relating to the out-of-state student and obtain information from the Maryland institution. The Board may need to track and monitor the frequency that telehealth counseling services are provided, gaps in school enrollment, and graduation dates over the three year period. The Bill does not address instances where therapy sessions may need to be increased or when a student remains in Maryland over the summer and is not enrolled in school.

Licensing standards are not the same.

The standards for Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors vary widely from state to state. The Bill does not address the variance or provide a mechanism whereby the Board can do anything to support the health, safety or welfare of the out-of-state students at Maryland institutions. We believe this Bill creates an exception without a plan or any regard to potential negative outcomes and the severity of the impact on the counseling profession, the university, and the community at large.

Lacks clinically appropriate treatment.

HB 1474 is not the most clinically responsible course of treatment. In general, it is not in the best interest of a young person who is already possibly vulnerable to mental health challenges to have a clinician that is in another state. College students moving to college is not a crisis situation. Students moving to Maryland to attend an institute of higher education is a planned transition. Transitioning to college is an intense experience that is fluid, and with challenges that can arise quickly. It is the clinical responsibility of all therapists, counselors, social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists to appropriately transition their clients to a new provider when they are not able to continue care. In the case of students attending an institute of higher learning, this transition is planned months in advance with a known location and services at all institutions to help students find local providers for continued care. It is the responsibility of the provider to appropriately plan and transition their clients during such situations. This type of transition is predictable and should allow adequate time for the provider to establish a new provider for their client prior to the move. It is the responsibility of a therapist to prepare a client who is moving to another state. In an acute crisis a clinician in another state is not able to provide the necessary support and is unable to monitor and help to stabilize the client in real time as a local provider would. While local providers are more familiar with local mental health resources than a provider not practicing in or familiar with Maryland.

Lacks inclusivity.

Lastly, we believe the legislature must also keep in mind that the other four professions regulated by the Board also provide counseling services to students going to college. From the Board's perspective it is not appropriate to pass a law where out-of-state students who have a professional counselor may continue seeing their counselor, but out-of-state students who see any of the other professional licenses regulated by this Board may not. The lack of inclusion of the other counseling professions seems arbitrary. The Board has procedures in place for out of state providers to get licensed in Maryland, and properly vetted. The Board holds the position that this Bill would create dysfunction and chaos and fails to protect out-of-students who receive mental health services while attending Maryland institutions.

For all of the reasons stated, the Board respectfully urges the Committee to submit an unfavorable vote on HB 1474.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Winnie Moore, Board Chair, at (240) 346-9712 or email winnie.moore@maryland.gov or Lillian Reese, Legislative Liaison at (443) 794-4757 or lillian.reese@maryland.gov.

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.