



409 7th St Northwest, Suite 305
Washington, D.C. 20004
January 31, 2025

Senate Finance Committee
Maryland General Assembly
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Via electronic submission

RE: SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 665, Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance—Annual Behavioral Health Wellness Visits—Coverage and Reimbursement Support

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Inseparable, I am writing to urge your support of HB 665, which will require providers to be reimbursed by Medicaid and commercial insurance for a behavioral health wellness visit.

Inseparable is a nonprofit mental health advocacy organization focused on closing the treatment gap for people with mental health conditions, improving crisis response, expanding the workforce, and supporting youth mental health.

Youth and adults continue to face rising mental health challenges. In fact, The Business Group on Health's [2024 Large Employer Health Care Strategy Survey](#) notes mental health challenges as a top area of impact. 77% of employers reported an increase in mental health concerns this year and, according to the report, are highly focused on increasing access to mental health services, including lowering cost barriers to care.

HB 665 would provide exactly the kind of policy change that employers, individuals, and families need, but may not know to ask for. Many people, including employers, assume that an initial behavioral health visit will be covered, regardless of whether there's a diagnosis, as is common in physical health. Unfortunately, that is not the case—and it creates a real barrier to the very early identification and intervention that could provide both youth and adults the help they need *before* their symptoms become more severe and harder and more costly to treat. This bill would change that and require plans to cover an initial behavioral health assessment, and to reimburse a provider at the same rate, regardless of whether the visit results in a diagnosed condition.

To date, six states, CO, CT, DE, IL, MA, and NM, have enacted similar commonsense legislation to cover annual behavioral health wellness visits.

Inseparable is grateful to Senator Augustine for introducing HB 665 and we respectfully request a favorable report on this bill by the Committee.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Angela Kimball".

Angela Kimball

Chief Advocacy Officer