MARYLAND PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY

February 17, 2026

The Honorable Health Bagnall
Health Committee
241 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Support With Amendment: HB 772: Workgroup on Behavioral Health Rate Methodology Modernization - Establishment

Dear Chairwoman Bagnall & Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) and the Washington Psychiatric Society (WPS) are state medical organizations whose physician members specialize in diagnosing, treating, and preventing mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty-five years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, both organizations work to ensure available, accessible, and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens and strive through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branches of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland, MPS/WPS represent over 1200 psychiatrists and physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPS/WPS support Senate With Amendment House Bill 772: Workgroup on Behavioral Health Rate Methodology Modernization - Establishment. MPS strives to secure the future of CCBHCs in Maryland. CCBHCs are a proven model of comprehensive and coordinated behavioral health services for all in need. Maryland has fallen behind other states in the expansion of CCBHCs due to the lack of a sustainable funding model. A workgroup to analyze the rate methodology is a critical step to move in the right direction.

Applying the findings of the workgroup to the funding of OMHCs is also strongly supported. OMHCs serve a critical role in providing care within the public behavioral health system. The financial viability of OMHCS is often precarious due to the balance of meeting staffing regulatory requirements and operating on a strictly fee-for-service basis. Alternative funding methodologies are needed to help secure the future of OMHCs in the state thus preventing further closure of these critical clinics.

We offer one minor amendment to the bill to ensure that there is adequate representation of psychiatrists in the workgroup because psychiatrists play a critical role in the care provided in both settings and might not be included based on the current language. We offer the amendment in Section 7 of adding “one psychiatrist who works in the outpatient public behavioral health system. With this amendment, MPS and WPS ask the committee for a favorable report on SB 772.

If you have any questions regarding this testimony, please contact MPS lobbyist, Lisa Harris Jones at lisa.jones@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
The Maryland Psychiatric Society & Washington Psychiatric Society
Legislative Action Committee