

# MARYLAND PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY



February 13, 2026

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

Support: House Bill 860: Petitions for Emergency Evaluation (Arnaud and Magruder Memorial Act)

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 House Bill 860: Mental Health Law - Petitions for Emergency Evaluation. When a clinician goes to the trouble of filing an emergency petition, it means that the person is truly a danger to self and/or others and should be evaluated in the emergency department. HB860 wisely extends the time to serve an emergency petition by five days after its expiration date. Under current law, five days is not always a long enough time to locate a patient, especially one who has absconded. As such, MPS and WPS ask the committee for a favorable report on HB860.

If you have any questions regarding this testimony, please contact MPS lobbyist, Lisa Harris Jones at [lisa.jones@mdlobbyist.com](mailto:lisa.jones@mdlobbyist.com).

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