

February 19, 2026

Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and distinguished members of the Health Committee,

NAMI Maryland and our 11 local affiliates across the state represent a network of more than 60,000 families, individuals, community-based organizations, and service providers. NAMI Maryland is a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to providing education, support, and advocacy for people living with mental illnesses, their families, and the wider community.

NAMI Maryland recognizes that physical and mental health symptoms and conditions are often related and intertwined in ways that necessitate the treatment of mental health conditions in primary or specialty care settings. The statewide shortage of mental healthcare providers also means that primary care and similar providers are the only hope for many Marylanders living with mental health conditions. People living in rural areas and underserved urban areas are especially at risk of having little access to psychiatry and other mental health services. For those reasons, NAMI Maryland supports our state's Collaborative Care Model (CoCM) and supports the effect of HB746—to lower a significant barrier of care by making mental health services more affordable and accessible.

SB428 makes services provided under the CoCM more affordable by eliminating copays, coinsurance, or deductible for services provided to Medicaid enrollees. People who are Medicaid eligible and living with mental health conditions are among the most vulnerable people in our state and any copay or other financial imposition can be an insurmountable barrier to them accessing the care they need, when they need it.

This bill is an important step towards addressing the lack of mental healthcare providers in Maryland and recognizing the important role of primary care providers in a statewide continuum of care.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB746.

Stephanie Slowly-Little  
Executive Director  
National Alliance on Mental Illness, Maryland

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