
By: **Delegate Hammen**

Introduced and read first time: January 15, 2003

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Health Insurance - Task Force to Study Access to Mental Health Services**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force on Access to Mental Health Services;
4 specifying the duties of the Task Force; specifying the members of the Task
5 Force; requiring the members of the Task Force to select a chairman of the Task
6 Force; requiring the Task Force to submit a certain report to the Governor and
7 the General Assembly by a certain date; providing for the termination of this
8 Act; and generally relating to access to mental health services.

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
10 MARYLAND, That:

11 (a) There is a Task Force on Access to Mental Health Services.

12 (b) The Task Force consists of the following members:

13 (1) Two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President
14 of the Senate;

15 (2) Two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of
16 the House;

17 (3) The Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene or the Secretary's
18 designee;

19 (4) The Maryland Insurance Commissioner or the Commissioner's
20 designee;

21 (5) The following members appointed by the Maryland Insurance
22 Commissioner:

23 (i) One representative of the commercial health insurance
24 industry;

25 (ii) One representative of a commercial health maintenance
26 organization; and

1 (iii) One representative of the managed behavioral health care
2 industry; and

3 (6) The following members appointed by the Secretary of Health and
4 Mental Hygiene:

5 (i) One representative of the Maryland Hospital Association;

6 (ii) One representative of the Mental Health Association of
7 Maryland;

8 (iii) One representative of the Community Behavioral Health
9 Association of Maryland;

10 (iv) One representative of Maryland's pediatric mental health
11 community;

12 (v) One psychiatrist licensed in Maryland; and

13 (vi) One social worker licensed in Maryland.

14 (c) The members of the Task Force shall select a chairman from the
15 membership of the Task Force.

16 (d) The Maryland Insurance Administration shall provide staff for the Task
17 Force.

18 (e) A member of the Task Force:

19 (1) May not receive compensation; but

20 (2) Is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State
21 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

22 (f) The Task Force shall:

23 (1) Study and make recommendations regarding compliance by
24 commercial health insurers and health maintenance organizations with the mental
25 health parity requirements under § 15-802 of the Insurance Article and § 19-703.1 of
26 the Health - General Article; and

27 (2) (i) Examine the systemic barriers experienced by
28 commercially-insured individuals when attempting to access community treatment;
29 and

30 (ii) Make recommendations to ensure that commercially-insured
31 individuals have access to medically-necessary mental health treatment.

32 (g) The Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the
33 Governor, and in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the
34 General Assembly, on or before December 31, 2003.

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take
2 effect July 1, 2003. It shall remain effective for a period of 6 months and, at the end of
3 December 31, 2003, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act
4 shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.