

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 84

(Senator Benson, *et al.*)

Finance

Health and Government Operations

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**Joint Committee on Access to Mental Health Services - Name Change**

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This bill changes the name of the Joint Committee on Access to Mental Health Services to the Joint Committee on Access to Behavioral Health Services, and makes other conforming changes.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill does not substantively change State activities or operations.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** In addition to the name change, the bill directs the committee to monitor access to public behavioral health services for eligible individuals and medically necessary behavioral health services for individuals covered by private insurance. The bill also requires the committee to submit an annual report on barriers to access to behavioral health services and recommendations to mitigate these barriers.

**Current Law:** The Joint Committee on Access to Mental Health Services was established by Chapter 318 of 2005.

**Background:** This change corresponds with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's implementation of Behavioral Health Integration, which integrates behavioral health (substance abuse and mental health) care delivery. The committee's work has

reflected the transition to behavioral health integration. Hearings during the past several years have included information on both substance abuse issues and mental health services.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** HB 488 (Delegate Pena-Melnyk, *et al.*) – Health and Government Operations.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 13, 2014  
ncs/ljm

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Analysis by: Kathleen P. Kennedy

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510