



Senate Finance Committee

February 18, 2020

Senate Bill 519

**Public Health - Behavioral Health Programs and Health Care Facilities -
Safety Plan**

Support with Amendments

NCADD-Maryland supports Senate Bill 519 with the amendments offered by the sponsor. With the amendments, the bill requires that substance use and mental health treatment programs have safety plans for their clients and employees, and requires the plans be filed with the State in order to obtain a license to operate. Similarly, if a program is required by an accreditation organization to have a community relations plan, the program must file it with the State in order to receive a license.

The State of Maryland adopted policy just a few years ago mandating that all substance use disorder and mental health programs receive accreditation from one of several national accrediting organizations. These organizations require treatment programs to have numerous policies and plans regarding all aspects of their operations. Safety or emergency preparedness plans are required. In addition, some programs are required to have community relations plans by their accreditation organizations. Having all of these plans filed with the Behavioral Health Administration is appropriate.

We ask for the adoption of the sponsor's amendments and a favorable report.

The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.