



March 6, 2020

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
House Health & Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support – HB 1140: Health - Mobile Response and Stabilization System for Children and Families in Maryland - Study

Dear Chairman Pendergrass and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) is a state medical organization whose physician members specialize in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, MPS works to ensure available, accessible and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens; and strives through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branch of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland excluding the D.C. suburbs, MPS represents over 700 psychiatrists as well as physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPS supports House Bill 1440: Health - Mobile Response and Stabilization System for Children and Families in Maryland - Study (HB 1140) for it seeks to expand crisis services to children. Crisis services for children are of dire necessity as a response to the limited number of inpatient beds for children in crisis, but also a response to the limited availability of long-term residential treatment beds for children. This mobile model of expanded crisis intervention services has been implemented and refined in Baltimore City for over 15 years. As a result, Baltimore City has reached more children who are experiencing crises with meaningful and accessible mental health care, while also saving the City money on inpatient psychiatric healthcare.

For the above reasons, MPS asks the committee to give HB 1140 a favorable report. If you have any questions with regard to this testimony, please feel free to contact Thomas Tompsett Jr. at tommy.tompsett@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully submitted,
The Legislative Action Committee for the Maryland Psychiatric Society.