



HB 1208 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Telehealth – Pilot Program

House Health and Government Operations Committee

March 4, 2020

Position on the Bill: SUPPORT

Submitted By: Maryland Telehealth Alliance

The Maryland Telehealth Alliance supports HB 1208 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Telehealth – Pilot Program because it eliminates current barriers to necessary health care and recognizes that providing care to patients needing behavioral health and/or chronic condition case management services through telehealth is easy, safe, efficient and cost effective in any location where a patient happens to be. Faster, easier access to health care leads to better patient outcomes.

At present, Maryland regulations require a patient be in certain specific authorized types of locations when receiving services through telehealth in order to receive Medicaid assistance. While restricting where a patient could receive services through telehealth may have made sense in the early days of telehealth technology development, these technologies have evolved and expanded rapidly since then. Continuing to restrict a patient's access to health care based on the patient's location is an obsolete barrier now that care access, especially for these conditions, can be available anywhere. Maryland's regulations need to be updated to reflect this. HB 1208 is a step forward.

For these reasons, Maryland Telehealth Alliance supports HB 1208 and requests a favorable report.