



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

March 6, 2020

The Honorable Anne R. Kaiser, Chair
House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: HB 1443 – Commission on Student Behavioral Health and Mental Health Treatment – Letter of Information

Dear Chair Kaiser and Committee members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this letter of information for House Bill 1443 (HB 1443) – Commission on Student Behavioral Health and Mental Health Treatment.

The bill creates a Commission to study and revise guidelines for student behavioral health and general mental health treatment and practices. Additionally, HB 1443 requires the Secretary of Health to choose one representative from the Maryland Mental Health Association as a designee to staff the Commission. Specifying one “mental health” organization not only shrinks the pool of candidates to fill the seat, but also hinders the Secretary’s authority to appoint the best “behavioral health” expert for the role.

The Department has been working with the Lieutenant Governor who has been leading the Commission to Study Mental and Behavioral Health in Maryland under Executive Order 01.01.2019.06. This Commission also has a subcommittee on youth and families. Creating a new Commission is duplicative of the Lt. Governor’s Commission youth subcommittee.

I hope this information is useful. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Director of Governmental Affairs Webster Ye at (410) 260-3190 or webster.ye@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Neall
Secretary