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RE: HB 915 Workgroup on Black, Latino, Asian American Pacific Islander, and Other Underrepresented Behavioral Health Professionals

Position: Support with Amendments

On behalf of the over 800 members of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland, Inc. (NPAM), and the over 7,100 Nurse Practitioners licensed to practice in Maryland, I am writing to support with amendments **HB 915 Workgroup on Black, Latino, Asian American Pacific Islander, and Other Underrepresented Behavioral Health Professionals**. We recognize the need to study and make recommendations to the Secretary about the behavioral health professions and fully support the need to form this workgroup.

This bill would establish a workgroup on Black, Latino, Asian American Pacific Islander, and other Underrepresented Behavioral Health Professionals and will provide for the composition, chair, and staffing of the workgroup. The bill includes language that lists the composition of the workgroup and states that three representatives from mental behavioral health professions in the State will be appointed to the workgroup.

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (PMHNPs) are advanced practice registered nurses who have been educated at either a Master’s or Doctoral level, and specialize in behavioral health. PMHNPs are uniquely qualified to be included as members of this workgroup. We therefore respectfully request that the current language of HB 915 be **amended to include a PMHNP as one of the three representatives from the behavioral health profession**.

NPAM would be happy to assist with the search for a qualified PMHNP to fill one of the workgroup seats. Feel free to contact Beverly Lang, Executive Director, NPAM if you need additional information.

Kindest Regards,

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