



SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Senate Bill 405
Higher Education - Student Identification Cards - Required Information
February 25, 2021
Favorable with Amendment

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts regarding Senate Bill 405. The bill requires each institution of higher education to provide the telephone number of Maryland's Helpline on student identification cards.

Overall, the Maryland Suicide Prevention Program aims to prevent suicide by collaborating with the Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention as well as various state departments, community agencies, providers, and members to increase awareness of suicide and improve preparedness to identify individuals at-risk, intervene, and provide support to promote healing and improved quality of life.

Suicide is reported as the second leading cause of death among college students, but it is preventable. The majority of college students who experience suicidal ideation also experience some form of mental health concern or distress, most commonly depression. The most effective way to prevent suicide is to identify the warning signs, intervene as appropriate, and refer to campus resources.

The operative words here are "campus resources." The USM asks that the bill be amended to give USM presidents the discretion to decide which crisis number appears on student identification cards.

The USM respectfully requests a favorable report with amendment on Senate Bill 405.