



February 4, 2021

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
3 East - Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support with Amendments – SB 466: Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services –
Modifications

Dear Chairman Kelley and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) and the Washington Psychiatric Society (WPS) are state medical organizations whose physician members specialize in diagnosing, treating, and preventing mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty-five years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, both organizations work 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 branches of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland, MPS and WPS represent over 1000 psychiatrists and physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPS and WPS support Senate Bill 466: Certificates for Involuntary Admission – Licensed Certified Social Worker–Clinical (SB 466) because physician involvement is still present. Other states allow LCSWs to be signatories for involuntary admissions, such as California and New York.¹ The committee should not that California's law does specify that LCSWs (and other mental health professionals) as secondary signatories should be a last resort if no other providers are available. California's law reads as follows:

(b) If the professional person in charge, or his or her designee, is the physician who performed the medical evaluation or a psychologist, the second person to sign may be another physician or psychologist unless one is not available, in which case a licensed clinical social worker, licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed professional clinical counselor, or registered nurse who participated in the evaluation shall sign the notice of certification.

MPS and WPS, therefore, propose the following amendment:

Strike on page 2 lines 11 through 16 in there entirety and substitute

¹ Only for outpatient treatment



**Washington
Psychiatric Society**

(6) Be accompanied by [the] TWO certificates, [of:] ONE OF WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED BY A LICENSED PHYSICIAN. The following individuals, in the specified order of priority, MAY COMPLETE THE SECOND CERTIFICATE:

- (i) a physician
- (ii) a psychologist
- (iii) a psychiatric nurse practitioner
- (iv) a licensed certified social worker-- clinical

With the amendment adopted, MPS and WPS would then ask the committee for a favorable report of SB 4666. 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 Maryland Psychiatric Society and the Washington Psychiatric Society
Joint Legislative Action Committee