

February 10, 2021

The Honorable Del. Shane Pendergrass, Chairperson  
**Health and Government Operations**  
Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen St. RM. 241  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **SUPPORT FOR HB 732** – Health Care Practitioners - Telehealth - Out-of-State Health Care Practitioners

Dear Chairperson Pendergrass and Distinguished Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

I want to thank you for taking my written statement of support for HB 732 on telehealth & out-of-state health care practitioners to be entered into the public hearing record. My name is Felicia Pressley, PhD, LCPC and I am a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor who resides in Charles County and practices in Prince George's County, Maryland.

Telebehavioral health modalities are important to me because first of all I am a member of the African American community servicing African American clients. I am not seeing clients in person due to the pandemic and it is important to continue the care needed for all of my clients who are primarily African American. We have my community of African American have been disproportionately impacted by the Pandemic, COVID-19.

We are still in the throes of a global pandemic and the need for health care and mental health services has never been greater. COVID-19 has revealed systemic flaws in our mental health services for providers and clients alike. It is imperative that we remove barriers to life saving services in a responsible and urgent manner.

This bill will authorize an out-of-state health care practitioner to provide telebehavioral health services to a patient located in the state in accordance with the state practice act. This legislation also requires the health occupations board to register an out-of-state health care practitioner, allowing for necessary oversight and monitoring of out-of-state practice.

While we are working to upload and implement the Counseling Compact in this state and throughout the U.S., this immediate action, removing barriers to critical supports, is essential for the wellbeing of Maryland residents, families, and a social services system overburdened by staggering need.

I strongly urge you to support telebehavioral health services and HB 732.

Sincerely,

Felicia Pressley  
Pressley Counseling and Wellness Owner, Therapist  
11298 Flagstaff Place, Waldorf, MD 20601