

## **HB 1029 – Maryland Higher Education Commission – Access to Mental Health Advisory Committee – Establishment**

Appropriations Committee  
March 15, 2022

### **POSITION: Support**

Please pass HB 1029.

My name is Raniya Holmes, and I attend Morgan State University. During my freshman year of college, I was diagnosed with seasonal depression and anxiety. My freshman year of college was a pivotal time in my development into adult hood, and I was not able to have access to the resources I needed to help me be successful in combating my new diagnosis. I made several attempts to go to my schools counseling center and was never seen due to lack of counselors with time, overbooked counselors who were probably experiencing burnout themselves from the number of students they had to see, or lack of counselors available to me. This caused me to have to learn how to navigate my depression and anxiety on my own because there were no counselors available to assist me.

The counseling center not accepting walk in appointments also posed as an issue for me and many other students especially in a moment of crisis where we may have needed to speak to counselors just for a moment to be calmed down but were turned away because we did not have an appointment. Another issue I faced with the counseling center was the 9-5 Monday through Friday schedule that they worked. It was very inconvenient for my schedule as a student to try to work around these times as I had class during the day and these times never allowed me to have time for a visit.

With this bill being passed, I believe that it will open up conversations for not only my school, but schools all around Maryland and beyond on making mental health resources more readily available and convenient for students. We deserve to have easy access for our mental health as we balance the stressors of adult life as well as our schooling. These changes will be very beneficial to those who have mental illnesses whilst attending college and could potentially reduce the rates of suicides of young adults. I hope that you look favorably upon this bill.

Please vote favorably on HB 1029.

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