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March 31, 2022

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair  
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Bill: HB406 – Children in Out-of-Home Placements – Placement in Medical Facilities**

**Position: Support**

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychological Association (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral-level psychologists from throughout the state, is writing in **SUPPORT** of **HB 406 – Children in Out-of-Home Placements-Placement in Medical Facilities**.

We applaud and support the purpose of the bill, to better manage the placement of children and adolescents into medical facilities/programs. We strongly support and thank the Sponsor for the inclusion of Psychologists as one of the mental health specialists uniquely qualified to evaluate the mental health status of children and adolescents.

The bill is a good start to building out a system of care that needs attention. For the Committee's consideration the MPA wanted to share these additional points:

1. Some flexibility could be helpful concerning the requirement that the evaluation be set for 48 hours prior to a court hearing. This may be difficult to meet for several reasons.
2. We appreciate the removal of the use of fines of local departments involved in this process, as originally included in the bill. This may have created the unintended consequence of conflict rather than encourage coordination between facilities and local childcare services.
3. The availability of out-of-home placements for children/adolescents in Maryland is sorely lacking. Additional legislation, in the form of establishing the funding for adequate numbers of out-of-home placements, would provide necessary resources to help fulfill the aims of this bill.

**For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB 406.** If we can provide any additional information or be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the MPA Executive Director, Stefanie Reeves, MA, CAE at 410-992-4258 or [exec@marylandpsychology.org](mailto:exec@marylandpsychology.org).

Respectfully submitted,

Sincerely,

*Linda McGhee*  
Linda McGhee, PsyD., J.D.  
President

*R. Patrick Savage, Jr.*  
R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.  
Chair, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Richard Bloch, Esq., Counsel for Maryland Psychological Association  
Barbara Brocato & Dan Shattuck, MPA Government Affairs