



Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill: Senate Bill 440 – Commission to Study the Health Care Workforce Crisis in Maryland - Establishment

Hearing Date: February 10, 2022

Position: Support with Amendments

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) support with amendments *Senate Bill 440- Commission to Study the Health Care Workforce Crisis in Maryland – Establishment*.

LCPCM supports the creation of this Commission because Maryland, just as other states, is currently experiencing a crisis-level shortage in the number of behavioral health practitioners. We think a careful, comprehensive study could yield some concrete policy initiatives that will alleviate the shortages in the near-future and build our workforce to prevent future shortages.

We have several suggested amendments that will support the Commission’s work in examining behavioral health shortages. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

Amendment 1: Deputy Secretary of Behavioral Health

On page 2 in after line 5, add “the Deputy Secretary of Behavioral Health”

Explanation: The participation of the Deputy Secretary of Behavioral Health is critical to the discussion about behavioral health workforce shortages.

Amendment 2: Input from behavioral health professionals

On page 2 in line 21, strike “may” and replace with “shall”.

Explanation: The bill permits the Commission to establish advisory committees. LCPCM believes that this should be a requirement, as the input of behavioral health professionals, professional associations, and behavioral health programs will be important.

Amendment 3: Expand focus to include school health

On page 2 in line 29, add “primary and secondary schools” after “nursing homes”

Explanation: The evaluation of shortages will only be complete if the Commission includes school settings. Our students are in the midst of a behavioral health crisis, and there are not enough providers in schools to support them.