



MID-ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS



The Maryland State Medical Society
63711 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 263701-5516
410.539.0872
Fax: 410.547.0915
1.800.492.1056
www.medchi.org

TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Malcolm Augustine

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Christine Krone

DATE: February 23, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 637 – *Health and Health Insurance – Behavioral Health Services – Expansion (Behavioral Health System Modernization Act)*

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society, the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers, and the Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition, we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 637. Specifically, among other provisions, Senate Bill 637 addresses weaknesses in both the State programs and in the private insurance market –

- Mandates that the Governor include funding in the budget each year for wellness and recovery centers, recovery community centers, and peer recovery services.
- Requires reimbursement in the Medicaid program for services provided by certified peer recovery specialists, measurement-based care provided in behavioral health settings, and behavioral health crisis response services.
- Makes permanent the Collaborative Care Model used in primary care settings that provide health care services to Program recipients (was a pilot program).
- Requires the Maryland Department of Health to provide reimbursement for wraparound services delivered by care coordinators under either the 1915(I) model or a mental health case management program.
- Requires beginning FY2023, the Behavioral Health Administration to fund 100 slots in the Mental Health Case Management Program for children or youth who are not eligible for Medicaid services and are at risk of out-of-home placement.
- Requires health insurance carriers (non-Medicaid) to reimburse a certified peer recovery specialist providing services under the supervision of a behavioral health care program.
- Requires health insurance carriers to provide coverage for behavioral health crisis response services and measurement-based care provided in a behavioral health setting.

Senate Bill 637 is a comprehensive bill that seeks to modernize and improve the delivery of behavioral health services in Maryland. Behavioral health care has been underfunded and care, at best, has been a patchwork of inconsistent services within the community and among private insurers. Consequently, many individuals find themselves either without services or trying to find needed care within our hospital emergency departments at both an individual cost and a societal cost. More importantly, the changes being made by Senate Bill 637 align with the Triple Aim of Maryland's Total Cost of Care Model and will reduce current pressures on our health care system.

Therefore, we urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 637.

For more information call:

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer

J. Steven Wise

Danna L. Kauffman

Christine Krone

410-244-7000