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SB 94 – Public Health - Maryland Suicide Fatality Review Committee

Position: Favorable

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments in support of Senate Bill 94. This bill establishes the Maryland Suicide Fatality Review Committee (“State team”) to identify and address the factors contributing to suicide deaths and facilitate system changes in the State to prevent suicide deaths.

As part of its mission, CareFirst is committed to driving transformation of the healthcare experience with and for our members and communities, with a focus on quality, equity, affordability, and access to care. Fundamental to holistic care is an informed strategy to address the behavioral health needs of our members and the communities we serve. Aided by annual statistical studies, the State team established by this bill will make determinations regarding: (1) issues related to individuals at risk for suicide, specifically trends, risk factors, current best practices in suicide prevention, lapses in systemic responses, and barriers to safety and well-being; and (2) strategies for the prevention of suicide deaths. The analysis and thought leadership produced by the State team will provide a critical tool to the many entities striving to reduce suicide deaths in the State, including CareFirst, and in effectively deploying resources to Marylanders at risk for suicide.

CareFirst strongly supports the policy goals advanced by Senate Bill 94 and stands ready to assist and advise the State team in whatever capacity is helpful. We look forward to partnering with legislators, the Maryland Health Department, public health groups, and other stakeholders to employ targeted strategies to reduce suicide deaths, and to improve the mental health and wellbeing of our members, provider partners, employees, and communities.

We urge a favorable report.

About CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield

In its 83rd year of service, CareFirst, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, is a not-for-profit healthcare company which, through its affiliates and subsidiaries, offers a comprehensive portfolio of health insurance products and administrative services to 3.4 million individuals and employers in Maryland, the District of Columbia and Northern Virginia. In 2019, CareFirst invested \$43 million to improve overall health, and increase the accessibility, affordability, safety, and quality of healthcare throughout its market areas. To learn more about CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, visit our website at www.carefirst.com and our transforming healthcare page at www.carefirst.com/transformation, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [Instagram](#).