



Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

PO Box 131 ♦ Stevenson, Maryland 21153 ♦ mota.memberlodge.org

Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 637 - Health and Health Insurance - Behavioral Health Services - Expansion (Behavioral Health System Modernization Act)

Date: February 23, 2020

Position: Support

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) supports *Senate Bill 637 – Health and Health Insurance - Behavioral Health Services - Expansion (Behavioral Health System Modernization Act)*. This bill would significantly increase the state’s investment in behavioral health care.

Occupational therapists address barriers that individuals with mental health conditions experience in the community by providing interventions that focus on enhancing existing skills; remediating or restoring skills; modifying or adapting the environment or activity; and preventing relapse. As such, both the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) include mental health services within the scope of practice for occupational therapists.¹

Over the past few years, the General Assembly took several necessary steps to increase investment and modernize our state’s education system. We see this bill as doing similar work for our behavioral health system. Many Marylanders do not have access to necessary care due to gaps in our system. This bill will help close these gaps by increasing investment in many areas, including peer support services, crisis response, and wraparound services for children.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Scott Tiffin at stiffin@policypartners.net or (443) 350-1325.

¹ National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy – Certificate Renewal.
<https://www.nbcot.org/Certificants/Certification>

American Occupational Therapy Association – Occupational Therapy’s Role in Community Mental Health.

<https://www.aota.org/~media/Corporate/Files/AboutOT/Professionals/WhatIsOT/MH/Facts/Community-mental-health.pdf>

