



**House Health & Government Operations Committee
March 2, 2022**

**House Bill 715
Administrative Services Organizations – Requirements for Retraction,
Repayment, or Mitigation of Claims**

Support

The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) supports House Bill 715 to hold Optum, Maryland's public behavioral health system's administrative services organization (ASO) accountable for its failed system.

For the last two years, Maryland's behavioral health system of authorization, billing, and payments has been dysfunctional. NCADD-Maryland's provider partners started 2020 on daily phone calls with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and representatives from Optum to try to ascertain what the problems with the new system were. Two years and a global pandemic later, this system is still broken. At a time where mental health and substance use disorder treatment programs are needed more than ever, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been wasted by providers paying for extra support to match claims data to billing and estimated payments.

Behavioral health providers should no longer bear the financial burden of this failed system. Not one more penny should be paid to the State until Optum can prove with claims and billing reports are accurate. In addition, in this time of unprecedented surplus and the challenges that remain from the pandemic, Maryland should grant full debt relief to providers.

We urge your support of House Bill 715.

The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.