



Testimony submitted to Health and Government Operations Committee  
January 20, 2022

**House Bill 97 – Workgroup on Black, Latino, Asian American Pacific Islander, and Other Underrepresented Behavioral Health Professionals**

**Support**

The Maryland Association of Youth Services Bureaus (MAYSB), which represents a network of Bureaus that provide delinquency prevention and intervention services, **supports HB 97 - Workgroup on Black, Latino, Asian American Pacific Islander, and Other Underrepresented Behavioral Health Professionals**. Youth Service Bureaus are community-based delinquency prevention programs that provide behavioral health services to a diverse population of youth and their families.

HB 97 will establish a Workgroup to investigate strategies to create a more diverse and representative behavioral health workforce. Youth Service Bureaus work with youth and their families from diverse backgrounds such as Black, Latino, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and other Underrepresented and recognize the importance of having a work force that is representative of the persons served.

Professionals from diverse backgrounds bring their own life experiences to the work and the field of behavioral health which enriches the field and improves its ability to provide services that are meaningful and relevant to those served. Currently, there is a known disparity in access to behavioral health services for persons from Black, Latino, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and other Underrepresented groups.

Creating a workforce that is more representative of these groups will assist in closing this divide and ensuring that everyone has access to behavioral health care.

We ask that you give this legislation a favorable finding.

Respectfully Submitted:

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