

Thank you, distinguished members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. I am writing in support of HB 0699 which would offer no charge grief counseling services to next of kin in cases of sudden death by suicide and or drug overdose.

Access to grief counseling should be available to all in these cases regardless of financial status.

Eight years ago my wife and I were in a total state of shock and horror when we were informed of my son's sudden death by suicide. We were not aware of where to turn for support. Having access to no charge counseling services would have been most valuable during the most difficult time in our lives.

Having access to no charge grief counseling services would offer support to a growing number of Marylanders when such support is drastically needed.

Once again thank you for your time and support of this bill.

Donald Baughan