

Committee: Appropriations

Testimony on: HB573 – Access to Mental Health Advisory Committee – Establishment

Position: Favorable

24 February 2023

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and the members of the Appropriations Committee,

The *University of Maryland, Student Government Association* supports HB573 establishing the Access to Mental Health Advisory Committee in Higher Education. This bill is important because it prioritizes mental health for college students and benefits the communities of students who are seeking accessible and productive services.

My name is Emma Selvin and I am a member of the Student Government Association at the University of Maryland, and I am writing in support of HB573. Mental health has advanced over the last decade with it becoming a more open conversation that people can have with each other. Mental health is becoming a topic that is encouraged rather than silenced. It is the job of every university to make sure students are able to speak about their experiences. As someone who has personally struggled with mental health since arriving at college, I have not been able to receive services from the Counseling Center at the University of Maryland. This is due partially to the high demand for these services, especially following the pandemic and a low supply of qualified therapists and psychologists who can see students on a regular basis. While I have been fortunate enough to have the financial resources to seek outside help, there are many at the University of Maryland as well as other USM institutions who do not.

HB573 would give universities the ability to create customizable mental health care for their students which would ultimately reduce stress, cost, and barriers to these services. This bill would ultimately help students across the state of Maryland, and create greater chances for academic success in the healthiest way possible. Mental health services are a necessity for all, and accessibility is key to a thriving atmosphere.

I request a favorable report on HB573.

Thank you,



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