

ADRIAN BOAFO
Legislative District 23
Prince George's County

Economic Matters Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 219
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3047 · 301-858-3047
800-492-7122 Ext. 3047
Adrian.Boafo@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Chairman Barnes,
Appropriations Committee
House Office, Room 121
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairman Barnes and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

Depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts have skyrocketed over the past decade among our young people. With the stress of school, home life, and the state of the world, college students struggle with many mental health risks. Covid-19 has exacerbated mental health cases by increasing students' stress and anxiety levels. This impacts students' academic performance and overall well-being. While the number of young people seeking mental health care has drastically increased, the services are not meeting the demand. We need to better understand why our institutions are falling short because the consequences of these inadequacies may cause more severe depression, anxiety, or, even worse, the loss of life.

HB0573 will establish a committee dedicated to examining the policies and procedures adopted by institutions of higher education in the State related to mental health care access and prevention and treatment of mental illness of students. The committee aims to investigate the challenges encountered by institutions when addressing the demand for mental health services and to review the most effective methods for accessing off-campus mental health services. Moreover, it will examine the best practices for implementing counseling services, including crisis, personal, mental health, sexual violence, and substance abuse counseling. The committee will also assess the most suitable models for providing mental health services, such as stand-alone centers, integrated student health services, comprehensive services, case management, and crisis resources. Additionally, the study will identify issues faced in rural areas and regions experiencing workforce shortages and provide recommendations on other relevant matters the committee deems appropriate.

HB573 will ensure uniformity amongst mental health services across our higher education institutions in Maryland that is why I strongly urge a favorable report on HB0573.

Thank you,

Delegate Adrian Boafo