

**Committees:** Appropriations

**Testimony on:** HB573

**Position:** Favorable

23 February 2023

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

*The University of Maryland, Student Government Association* supports HB573 in establishing the Access to Mental Health Advisory Committee in Higher Education. This bill is important because it prioritizes mental health in college aged students.

I have only been on campus for a little over one semester now, and I have seen the tremendous impact that the Mental Health Counseling Center has had on my friends, peers, and community. I have had friends turn to me in their lowest, in their truest time of need, and I have not been able to help them. I am not a professional. I can be a shoulder for my friends and peers to cry on, but I can not help them with depression. I have had friends who have come to me with these issues, I am so grateful that we have the resources available for my friends to get help. These resources are the reason that my friends are alive.

There are communities and universities across Maryland that do not have the luxuries that we have. All people deserve these resources. Mental health is a real struggle that 1 in 5 Americans deal with in a year ([shorturl.at/ej1qS](https://shorturl.at/ej1qS)). More than 50% of Americans will be diagnosed with a mental health issue at some point in their lifetime. People deserve help. Your constituents deserve to be happy. These are resources that are available in our community, we at the University of Maryland are lucky enough to access them. Help out the other communities in our area, they deserve them too. Equalize the mental health resources in institutions across our state, establish the Mental Health Advisory Committee.

I respectfully request a favorable report on HB573.

Thank you,



*Gannon Sprinkle*  
*University of Maryland — College Park,*