



Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Mid-Atlantic States, Inc
2101 East Jefferson Street
Rockville, Maryland 20852

January 19, 2023

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB 3 – Support

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee:

Kaiser Permanente is pleased to support SB 3, “Trust Fund – Funding.” This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Kaiser Permanente is the largest private integrated health care delivery system in the United States, delivering health care to over 12 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia.¹ Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States, which operates in Maryland, provides and coordinates complete health care services for over 825,000 members. In Maryland, we deliver care to approximately 475,000 members.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland’s transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland’s Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

The fund also supports developing and implementing a statewide initiative for the coordination and delivery of other programs along the continuum of behavioral health crisis response services in the State, including mobile crisis team services, crisis stabilization centers, and other acute behavioral health care services. These programs are needed to address the growing need for mental health services in our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact me at Allison.W.Taylor@kp.org or (202) 924-7496 with questions.

¹ Kaiser Permanente comprises Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., the nation’s largest not-for-profit health plan, and its health plan subsidiaries outside California and Hawaii; the not-for-profit Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, which operates 39 hospitals and over 650 other clinical facilities; and the Permanente Medical Groups, self-governed physician group practices that exclusively contract with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and its health plan subsidiaries to meet the health needs of Kaiser Permanente’s members.

Kaiser Permanente
Comments on SB 3
January 19, 2023

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Allison Taylor".

Allison Taylor
Director of Government Relations
Kaiser Permanente