

Committee: Education, Energy and the Environment

Testimony on: SB263 – Access to Mental Health Advisory Committee – Establishment

Position: Favorable

5 February 2023

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and the members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee,

The *University of Maryland, Student Government Association* supports HB1029 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 here today to support SB263. 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.

SB263 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 to all, and accessibility is key to a thriving atmosphere.

I request a favorable vote on SB263.

Thank you,



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