



**Committee:** Senate Finance Committee

**Bill Title:** Senate Bill 582 – Behavioral Health Care - Treatment and Access (Behavioral Health Model for Maryland)

**Hearing Date:** March 7, 2023

**Position:** Support with Amendment

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The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *Senate Bill 582 – Behavioral Health Care – Treatment and Access (Behavioral Health Model for Maryland)*. The bill proposes a comprehensive approach to improving access to behavioral health services in Maryland. The approach includes:

- Creation of the Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access. The Commission will conduct a needs assessment, review prior studies, and prepare recommendations to improve access to behavioral health care in Maryland. The Commission will gather input from the public through several workgroups;
- Establishment of a state designation for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics. With this designation, certain providers will be eligible for federal funding to integrate primary care into behavioral health services.
- Extension of telehealth provisions under SB 3 of 2021. A key provision is a requirement for reimbursement of audio-only services. This reimbursement has been critical since the shift to telehealth during COVID.<sup>i</sup>

LCPCM requests an amendment to create a seat for licensed clinical professional counselors on the Commission. There are nearly 4,500 licensed clinical professional counselors in Maryland.<sup>ii</sup>

On page 4 in line 27, insert:

“ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LICENSED CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS OF MARYLAND”

We ask for a favorable report on the legislation with our requested amendment. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net) or (443) 926-3443.

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<sup>i</sup> [https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/hit/hit\\_telemedicine/documents/hit\\_tlth\\_study\\_recommendations.pdf](https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/hit/hit_telemedicine/documents/hit_tlth_study_recommendations.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> <https://health.maryland.gov/bopc/pdfs/bopct22annualreport.pdf>