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TO: The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Guy Guzzone

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DATE: February 14, 2023

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 362 – *Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics – Established*

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP), and the Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition (MdCSWC), we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 362.

Senate Bill 362 will increase access to comprehensive community based mental health and substance use care by expanding Maryland’s network of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs). CCBHCS are federally designated, proven models that provide a comprehensive range of services, and connection to other systems and supports. CCBHCs must provide nine core services, including (1) targeted case management, (2) somatic screening, (3) veterans’ services, (4) 24/7 crisis intervention, (5) peer support, (6) psych rehab, (7) screening, diagnosis, and assessment, (8) treatment planning, and (9) outpatient mental health and substance use treatment. They are based on the federally qualified health center (FQHC) model, providing services to the underserved.

MedChi, MDAAP, and MdCSWC recognize nationwide the successes of CCBHCs:

- CCBHCs are serving millions and providing thousands of new clients with needed care.
- The CCBHC model is helping address health disparities, enabling clinics to improve access to care for underserved communities.

- CCBHCs deliver lifesaving crisis support services in their communities, which helps divert people in crisis from hospitals, emergency departments, and jails.
- CCBHCs and grantees are addressing the nation's opioid crisis by dramatically expanding access to medication-assisted treatment.
- The CCBHC model is alleviating the impact of the community-based mental health and substance use treatment workforce shortage by enabling clinics to increase hiring.¹

For these reasons, we urge a **favorable** report.

¹ NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MENTAL WELLBEING. (2022, October 26). Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics Tackle Mental Health, Substance Use Crises with Expanded Access to Care. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/certified-community-behavioral-health-clinics-tackle-mental-health-substance-use-crises-with-expanded-access-to-care-301660325.html>