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January 31, 2023

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COMMITTEE: Senate Finance Committee

BILL: SB 101 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program –
Collaborative Care Model Services – Implementation and
Reimbursement Expansion

POSITION: Support

The Horizon Foundation is Howard County’s community health foundation and the largest independent health philanthropy in the state of Maryland. We lead community change so everyone in Howard County can live a longer, better life.

The Foundation is pleased to support SB 101 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Collaborative Care Model Services – Implementation and Reimbursement Expansion.

SB 101 permanently expands access to and provides reimbursement for services provided in accordance with the Collaborative Care Model under the Maryland Medical Assistance Program, also known as Medicaid. The model is a validated, patient-centered, evidence-based approach for integrating physical and behavioral health care in primary care settings. It uses a team-based approach to deliver (1) care coordination and management; (2) regular, systematic monitoring and treatment using a validated clinical rating scale; and (3) regular, systematic behavioral health caseload reviews and consultation for patients. Numerous pilots across the country employing this model have resulted in improved health outcomes, along with cost savings realized through reduced hospitalizations and more tailored treatment. Given Collaborative Care’s success rate, commercial health insurers in Maryland and Medicare already reimburse providers operating under this model.

Maryland’s own Collaborative Care pilot has demonstrated “clinically significant improvement” in depression and anxiety symptoms for more than 65 percent of participants. More than twenty other states have permanently installed the Model and Maryland should join them.

Horizon Foundation Testimony
SB 101 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program
Collaborative Care Model Services – Implementation and Reimbursement Expansion
January 31, 2023

Mental health has been one of the Foundation’s top priorities in recent years. Together with our many community partners and grantees, we have raised awareness through our Mental Health Film Festival, reached thousands of community members with our Emotional Support Human campaign, and helped the Howard County Public School System enhance the mental health supports available to students during the school day – a program that is now expanding to every public school in the County. We have also worked to increase access to mental health crisis services through our work with the Greater Baltimore Regional Integrated Crisis Systems (GRBICS) Partnership, as well as helped support the operation of Sheppard Pratt’s new urgent care behavioral health clinic in Elkridge. At the same time, recent data shows that anxiety, depression, and other mental health indicators are on the rise. Permanently implementing the Collaborative Care Model will help families get the behavioral health care they need and deserve.

SB 101 will expand access to mental health care for all Marylanders, Howard County residents included, using a proven, patient-centric model. For this reason, the Horizon Foundation **SUPPORTS SB 101** and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.

Thank you for your consideration.