



Senate Finance Committee

March 7, 2023

Senate Bill 582

**Behavioral Health Care - Treatment and Access -
Behavioral Health Model for Maryland
Support**

NCADD-Maryland supports Senate Bill 582 to establish, in part, another commission to examine the state's behavioral health care system. It will be important for this commission to examine how the many services and policies interact and how they can be better connected.

While large commissions can be cumbersome, our behavioral health system in Maryland has many stakeholders. NCADD-Maryland appreciates being named as one of the members and we request the following:

- Replace on page 4, lines 12 and 13 with:
 - o One representative from the Maryland Addictions Directors Council;
 - o One representative from the Maryland Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence;
 - o One representative from the Maryland-DC Society of Addiction Medicine
 - o One representative from On Our Own of Maryland
- Replace on page 4, lines 8 and 9 with:
 - o One consumer of substance use disorder treatment services
 - o One consumer of mental health services
- Replace on page 4, lines 10 and 11 with:
 - o One family member of an individual with a mental health condition
 - o One with a substance use disorder condition
- One representative from the Maryland Parity Coalition
- One individual with expertise in the certification of peer recovery specialists
- One representative from Maryland Legal Aid
- The Special Secretary for Opioid Response
- One representative from the Department of Housing and Community Development
- One representative from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

In §13-4806, four specific workgroups are established. We would request language that would not limit the commission from establishing others.

In §13-4807, (A)(2) directs the commission to include with recommendations estimates on funding required to implement recommendations. We urge an amendment that adds that the commission should also include an estimate on any savings anticipated with recommendations.

With regard to the directives of what the commission should examine and make recommendations on, we request adding the following:

- Make recommendations for the creation of a consumer assistance program to help individuals understand and navigate insurance coverage for mental health and substance use disorder care, address denials of care, and identify system-wide barriers to care regardless of insurance coverage;
- Make recommendations for adoption of comprehensive harm reduction services for substance use disorders; and
- Examine models of integration of substance use disorder and mental health services in medical care settings, including hospital emergency departments, and make recommendations for improving integration of treatment of substance use disorders.

In reference to the Behavioral Health Care Coordination Value-Based Purchasing Pilot Program, §13-4904(E)(3)(I) requires in an evaluation the comparison of several data elements before and after enrollment of participants. We believe a fourth data point should look at incarceration.

NCADD-Maryland also strongly supports the other two components of this legislation, the extension of the sunset of the Preserve Telehealth Access Act and the creation of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics.

With these amendments, we urge a favorable report.