



Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 291

Title: Commission on Public Health - Establishment

Hearing Date: February 15, 2023

Position: Support

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *Senate Bill 291 – Commission on Public Health - Establishment*. The bill will establish a Commission on Public Health to make recommendations to improve the delivery of foundational public health services in the state. Foundational public health services are defined as foundational areas and foundational capabilities; these include communicable disease control, chronic disease and injury prevention, environmental public health, maternal, child, and family health, access to care, assessment and surveillance, community partnership development, equity, organizational competencies, policy development and support, accountability and performance management, emergency preparedness and response, and communications.

LCPCM applauds this bill in its holistic approach to working towards meaningful reform to our public health system and for recognizing the importance of access to, and linkage with, clinical care. Maryland has a history of insufficient psychiatric bed availability, crisis support, funding, and long emergency department wait times and at the same time there are a number of programs that the state could better utilize to alleviate these concerns. This bill would create a Commission to dive deep into the challenges that persist in the state, including opportunities for public comment so that people can share their own personal challenges and successes while navigating the systems within a variety of foundational areas, and offer up collaborative solutions that cross state departments.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.