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Health and Government
Operations Committee

Subcommittees

Government Operations
and Health Facilities

Insurance and Pharmaceuticals



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of House Bill 291: Health Occupations—Clinical and Graduate
Alcohol and Drug Counselors—Licensure**

February 16th, 2023

Good afternoon, Madam Chair, Vice-Chair and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. I'm Delegate Pam Guzzone representing Howard County's District 13 and I am here in support of House Bill 291.

HB 291 will adjust Maryland's licensure requirements for Drug and Alcohol Counselors. More specifically, the legislation will make the credentialing requirements more consistent with the requirements of other professions regulated by the Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists. The current statutory requirements include, for example, candidates to have graduated from an accredited regional university.

HB 291 will remove the "regional" requirement. With the workforce challenges being what they are, I do not believe we want to make a graduate of an accredited program in California have to jump through additional hoops to be licensed in Maryland.

Removing barriers by streamlining the licensure process for drug and alcohol counselors will help reduce administrative barriers and support the healthcare workforce without affecting quality licensure standards.

HB 291 will expand the workforce pipeline and help us address critical workforce shortages without impacting quality of care. I respectfully request a favorable report for HB 291.