



Maryland Community Health System

Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill: House Bill 271 - 9–8–8 Trust Fund – Funding

Hearing Date: February 7, 2023

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *House Bill 271 – 9–8–8 Trust Fund – Funding*. This bill requires \$12 million in state funding for the 988 Trust Fund fiscal 2025.

MCHS is a network of federally qualified health centers focused on providing somatic, behavioral, and oral health care services to underserved communities. Many of our patients are Medicaid enrollees. In a report just released this month, the Kaiser Family Foundation estimated that 39% of Medicaid enrollees face behavioral health issues.ⁱ It has always been difficult for people to identify behavioral health resources; and with the recent health care professional shortage crisis, access to care has become more complicated to navigate.

We support this legislation because Maryland consumers need the support of the 988 Program to find services in their community. If we ensure that the program has sufficient resources, we can help Marylanders manage their behavioral health needs and avoid crisis situations.

We ask for a favorable report on this legislation. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

ⁱ https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/a-look-at-strategies-to-address-behavioral-health-workforce-shortages-findings-from-a-survey-of-state-medicaid-programs/?utm_campaign=KFF-2023-Medicaid&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=241088401&hsenc=p2ANqtz-9C3OXFb9do6iUSNn8DgzRQAHHfc8GZmdLgWLVQrn2ogX89PruDfKoraOXDS_cR8xpDMDAC8YDBuczpLsvZao1Ucb3wQ

