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Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Rm 241
Annapolis, MD 21401

March 27, 2023

RE: Senate Bill 786– Reproductive Health Services-Protected Information and Insurance Requirements

Position: Support

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychological Association, (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral level psychologists throughout the state, is writing to express SUPPORT for Senate Bill 786 – Reproductive Health Services Protected Information and Insurance Requirements, which will enable all healthcare providers, including those that provide mental health services, to be able to honor the confidentiality and privacy of the patients that we see, particularly those that have sought out reproductive care.

A fundamental part of the therapeutic relationship—the part that distinguishes it from a close friendship—is the guarantee that clinicians will keep all information shared with them private. This core concept of therapy enables a therapeutic alliance to be created: where a client can feel safe within the therapeutic space. This bill enables assurances to clients that their reproductive information isn't seen as separate or different than any other private confidence that a client might share with their clinician.

Psychologists are often allied health professionals that clients will turn to in order to help them understand and make important decisions, including those that pertain to reproduction. With the state of reproductive health so tenuous in other states, we applaud lawmakers in Maryland for adding protections for providers and patients rather than stripping them away. We strongly **SUPPORT SB 786**, and request that the bill receives a **FAVORABLE REPORT**.

Thank you for considering our comments on SB 786. If we can provide any additional information or be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Pat Savage, MPA's Legislative Chair, at mpalegislativcommittee@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Resnick, Psy.D.

Rebecca Resnick, Psy.D.
President

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.
Chair, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Richard Bloch, Esq., Counsel for Maryland Psychological Association
Barbara Brocato & Dan Shattuck, MPA Government Affairs