



ClearView

COMMUNITIES

Regarding HB 576
Testimony by Dr. Michael Knable
Submitted to House and Government Operations Committee
Hearing, February 14, 2024
POSITION: STRONG SUPPORT

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony for your consideration today. I am a resident of Chevy Chase, Maryland and I have worked as a psychiatrist in Maryland for more than 30 years. I am currently the Medical Director of Clearview Communities, a long-term residential treatment center for young adults with severe mental illnesses that is in Frederick, MD.

I have also served on the District of Columbia Commission on Mental Health since 2007. The Commission is a division of the D.C. Superior Court and as commissioner, I assist a magistrate judge in making inpatient and outpatient civil commitment determinations. Assisted outpatient treatment (AOT) is a long-standing component of the District of Columbia system of care for individuals with mental illnesses. This less restrictive form of civil commitment allows people to continue to receive needed treatment but to do so on an outpatient basis, when they are ready, with the help of their community support systems.

I can attest that AOT is no more difficult or complicated to implement than any other form of court-ordered treatment and it has the added benefit of encouraging communication between hospitals, outpatient treatment providers and the courts to ensure that a person receives well-coordinated care. Since research demonstrates that it does decrease the likelihood that a person will be re-hospitalized, incarcerated, or unhoused while enrolled, it is unfathomable to me that this tool is not available for residents of Maryland.

I ask the House and Government Operations Committee to move HB 576 forward and help to complete our continuum of care in Maryland for the those who need and will benefit from AOT.

Michael Knable, DO
Medical Director
Direct Line: 301-360-5728