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Committee

*Subcommittees*

Health Occupations and Long-Term Care

Public Health and  
Minority Health Disparities



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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**HB1134 - Hospitals and Related Institutions - Residential Treatment Centers - Accreditation**

Good afternoon Madame Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present House Bill 1134.

In Maryland, the accreditation process for residential treatment centers does not match the process used by the overwhelming majority of states or the federal government. Currently, the only avenue for RTCs to receive accreditation in Maryland is through the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. Since the law implementing the JCAHO framework for accreditation was originally written, most jurisdictions now recognize RTC-specific accreditation organizations. Maryland has not caught up, causing unnecessary burden for our RTCs as they navigate different accreditation processes across States, disincentivizing new RTCs from operating in Maryland, and exacerbating existing shortages in service.

HB1134 brings Maryland up to date with its neighbors and the rest of the nation by expanding the list of recognized accreditors of residential treatment facilities to include the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and the Council on Accreditation. In recognizing CARF, the bill aligns Maryland's accreditation system with the most widely-accepted framework nationwide for accreditation: CARF accreditation is recognized and used by the federal government and 49 states, with the exception of Maryland. Because operators of RTCs in neighboring states already meet the requirements for CARF, HB1134 will reduce additional and unnecessary burdens on state regulators and on RTCs, incentivizing them to extend their reach into Maryland, increasing their capacity for care across the State. Additionally, expanding accreditation to recognize CARF and the Council on Accreditation will reduce administrative burdens on existing facilities, which will improve their provision of services across the state.

It is imperative that Maryland update its system of residential treatment center accreditation to align with the rest of the nation. Doing so will improve access to crucial behavioral health treatment programs delivered by our RTCs. I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 1134.