



## **Senate Bill 599**

### *Behavioral Health Crisis Response Grant Program - Funding*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Budget and Taxation Committee

Date: March 6, 2025

From: Karrington Anderson and Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 599. This bill requires the Governor to include \$5 million in the annual budget bill for fiscal years 2027 through 2029 for the Behavioral Health Crisis Response Grant Program.

Counties play a central role in delivering behavioral health services, often serving as the first point of contact for individuals experiencing mental health or substance use crises. The Behavioral Health Crisis Response Grant Program has been instrumental in expanding community-based crisis services, ensuring that individuals in crisis receive timely and appropriate care.

SB 599 strengthens this vital program by providing a dedicated funding stream to sustain and enhance crisis response efforts. Predictable and stable funding will allow counties to improve service delivery, invest in mobile crisis teams, and expand access to behavioral health support, reducing the burden on emergency rooms and law enforcement.

By securing additional resources for crisis response programs, this bill supports Maryland's commitment to a comprehensive and accessible behavioral health system. With the demand for crisis services continuing to rise, this funding will ensure that counties can meet community needs and provide effective, timely interventions.

For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 599.