## inseparable

409 7<sup>th</sup> St Northwest, Suite 305 Washington, D.C. 20004 March 20, 2025

House Health and Government Operations Committee Maryland General Assembly 3 East Miller Senate Office Building Annapolis, Maryland 21401

## RE: SUPPORT for HB 869, the Preserve Telehealth Access Act of 2025

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Hayes, and Members of the Committees:

On behalf of Inseparable, I write to urge passage of HB 869, the aptly named Preserve Telehealth Access Act of 2025. As a national nonprofit mental health advocacy organization, Inseparable supports better access to life-saving mental health care, including permanent coverage of telehealth.

Telehealth, which was first widely used during the pandemic, has quickly become a critical point of access for mental health care, reducing barriers to treatment such as transportation and lingering stigma and allowing for more timely care. Importantly, people with <u>disabilities</u> are the most likely to use telehealth, highlighting its value in reducing disparities in access for this population. Telehealth has also reduced no-show rates and, as a result, makes more efficient use of the behavioral health professional workforce. Finally, <u>studies</u> of telehealth's impact on patients with mental health and with other chronic conditions improving outcomes and in reducing healthcare utilization and <u>costs</u>.

HB 869 would preserve telehealth as an integral part of the state's health care delivery system, continuing the positive impact that telehealth has made in access to mental health care. We respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 869.

Respectfully,

Angele Riball

Angela Kimball Chief Advocacy Officer, Inseparable