

inseparable

March 26, 2025

House Health and Government Operations Committee
Maryland General Assembly
240 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Via electronic submission

RE: SUPPORT FOR SB 790 - Behavioral Health Advisory Council and the Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access - Plan to Implement Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment Requirements

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

On behalf of Inseparable, a national nonprofit mental health advocacy organization, I write to urge your support of SB 790. This legislation would require the Behavioral Health Advisory Council and the Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access to collaborate with stakeholders to implement recommendations from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to enhance children's mental health.

Maryland has long recognized the urgent need to support the wellbeing of children and has made important investments to do so. Recent data is beginning to show [improvements](#) among the state's youth, yet more needs to be done—particularly to identify children who are struggling and get them help earlier, before symptoms get worse and more costly and complex to treat.

Fortunately, CMS' new guidelines for [Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment \(EPSDT\)](#) services (mandatory for all state Medicaid programs' coverage of children), offer a promising path "to ensure that individual eligible children get the health care they need, when they need it, in the most appropriate setting." Inseparable is grateful to Delegate Woods and the many cosponsors of HB1083 for recognizing this unique opportunity to ensure that Maryland takes thoughtful advantage of CMS' guidance. Specifically, the bill will result in a Department of Health workgroup of stakeholders to create a plan that addresses EPSDT guidance, including screening and assessment, services to build skills for mental health, and services to address worrisome signs or symptoms with or without a diagnosis.

We respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 790 and continue Maryland's leadership in supporting children's mental health.

Respectfully,



Angela Kimball
Chief Advocacy Officer