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Written Testimony
House Bill 11 - Health Insurance - Access to Nonparticipating Providers -
Referrals, Additional Assistance, and Coverage
Health and Government Operations Committee – January 30, 2025
Support

Background: House Bill 11 would repeal the June 30, 2025 termination date for certain provisions of law related to referrals to and reimbursement of specialists and nonphysician specialists who are not part of a carrier's provider panel; and require that a certain referral procedure required to be established and implemented by certain carriers require the carrier to provide certain assistance to a member in identifying and arranging coverage for a specialist or nonphysician specialist for treatment of mental health or substance use disorder services.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council represents The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore and all of its agencies. This includes Jewish Community Services (JCS), which offers programs and services for people of all ages and backgrounds, helping them achieve their goals, enhance their wellbeing, and maximize their independence. JCS currently provides therapy and medication management to a large population of clients with both commercial and public insurance.

It is imperative to repeal the sunset on the termination date for referrals to and reimbursement of specialists and nonphysician specialists who are not part of a carrier's in-network provider system for certain medically necessary behavioral health services. For some, receiving this care can be a matter of life and death. As we endeavor to treat mental and behavioral health with the same seriousness as physical health within our society, this is an important step in that direction.

For these reasons, the Baltimore Jewish Councils asks for a favorable report on HB11.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.