

MARYLAND PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY



February 27, 2026

The Honorable Ben Barns
Appropriations Committee
121 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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Support HB 1559: Children in Unlicensed Settings and Pediatric Hospital Overstay Patients - Placement

Dear Chairman Barns & Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) and the Washington Psychiatric Society (WPS) are state medical organizations whose physician members specialize in diagnosing, treating, and preventing mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty-five years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, both organizations work to ensure available, accessible, and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens and strive through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branches of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland, MPS/WPS represent over 1200 psychiatrists and physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPS/WPS supports House Bill 1559: Children in Unlicensed Settings and Pediatric Hospital Overstay Patients – Placement. This bill would create an agency to help place children in pediatric hospitals, prohibit placement of children in unlicensed facilities, review laws and make recommendations for systems to provide adequate medical and mental health care, expand mobile crisis services, and ensure adequacy of number of beds (foster homes, group homes, RTC's, psychiatric hospitals, respite beds). Providing a single point of entry, care management of organizations, mobile response and wrap-around services, in-home community services, out-of-home treatment options, substance abuse integration, and developmental disability integration will be very beneficial to patient care.

MPS/WPS, therefore, ask this honorable committee for a favorable report on HB1559. If you have any questions regarding this testimony, please contact Lisa Harris Jones at lisa.jones@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully submitted,
The Maryland Psychiatric Society & Washington Psychiatric Society
Legislative Action Committee