



Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill: SB 490 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Step Therapy, Fail-First Protocols, and Prior Authorization – Prescription Drugs to Treat Serious Mental Illness

Hearing Date: February 17, 2026

Position: Support

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) support Senate Bill 490 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Step Therapy, Fail-First Protocols, and Prior Authorization – Prescription Drugs to Treat Serious Mental Illness. This bill prohibits prior authorization requirements, step therapy protocols, and fail–first protocols for prescription drugs used to treat individuals with serious mental illnesses (SMI).

Medication is an integral part of care for individuals suffering with SMI and the prescribing of these medications is very personalized as what may work for one individual may not work for another. Providers need the ability to work closely with their patients to prescribe medications best suited to patient needs without being forced to first go through protocols that deny patients’ access.

SB 490 is about providing protection to individuals suffering with SMI and ensuring access to medications in a timely manner to provide the best treatment possible.

LCPCM urges the Committee to give SB 490 a FAVORABLE Report.

Please contact Andrea Mansfield at amansfield@maniscanning.com or (410) 562-1617 if we can provide additional information.