

February 10, 2026

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and distinguished members of the Finance Committee,

NAMI Maryland and our 11 local affiliates across the state represent a network of more than 60,000 families, individuals, community-based organizations, and service providers. NAMI Maryland is a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to providing education, support, and advocacy for people living with mental illnesses, their families, and the wider community.

SB385 is a crucial step forward in ensuring that all Marylanders have equitable and affordable access to preventive healthcare. This bill requires the Secretary of Health to issue recommendations for immunizations, screenings, and preventative services for infants, children, and adults based on the generally accepted consensus of the scientific community. In a landscape where national clinical guidelines may undergo adjustments or shifts, it is vital that Maryland maintains a clear, evidence-based mechanism to ensure a consistent standard of care.

By authorizing the Secretary to update these recommendations based on the consensus of the scientific community and authoritative medical organizations, we are ensuring that Marylander's access to essential health services are maintained and stable rather than being subject to broader policy fluctuations.

While we support the intent of the bill as written, we also recognize that it can serve as a safeguard in the future. If national recommendations for behavioral health screenings were to change, this bill sets a precedent for Maryland to protect its own standards.

For these reasons, we at urge a favorable report.

Stephanie Slowly-Little
Executive Director
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