



April 1, 2026

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair
Committee on Finance
Room 3 East Wing, Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: Oppose HB 883 - Consumer Protection – Artificial Intelligence – Behavioral Health Care Prohibitions

Dear Chair Beidle and members of the Committee,

On behalf of Chamber of Progress, a tech industry association supporting public policies to build a society in which all people benefit from technological advances, **I respectfully urge you to oppose HB 883**. The bill rightly targets AI products that misrepresent themselves as behavioral health providers, but its disclosure and safety-protocol requirements sweep in every consumer AI product in the state, from voice assistants to coding tools. The result would be degraded everyday products and heavy compliance burdens on tools with no connection to mental health care.

HB 883's requirements apply to all consumer AI, not just behavioral health products

HB 883's prohibitions on AI misrepresenting itself as a behavioral health provider are reasonable and targeted. The problem is Section 14-5102(B), which requires every AI product sold or provided to Maryland consumers to display a disclosure at the beginning of each use and implement suicide-detection and crisis-referral protocols. These obligations are not limited to systems designed for or likely to encounter behavioral health conversations. They apply equally to a voice assistant answering a weather question, a coding tool helping a developer debug software, and a photo editor applying filters.

The amendments retain this universal applicability and do not create a risk-based distinction between general-purpose AI systems and those intended for behavioral health interactions.

Products with no behavioral health function would need to build and maintain mental health screening infrastructure simply because they use AI. This is a blanket mandate

that treats a coding assistant and a therapy chatbot as though they present the same risk.

The per-use disclosure requirement would break the products Marylanders depend on

Section 14-5102(B)(1) requires AI systems to display a notice that the consumer is "not communicating with a human" at the beginning of *each* use. For text-based applications, this adds friction to every session, but for voice-first platforms and ambient computing products, it would disrupt the experience entirely.

A Maryland family using a voice assistant for morning routines would hear "I am not a human" or "I am not a licensed provider" before every command: before checking the weather, before playing music, before setting a timer. Over the course of a day, that adds up to dozens of interruptions for a product that has never claimed to be a therapist and never will.

These tools work because they are fast and seamless. Mandatory per-interaction warnings strip away that value without any corresponding safety benefit, since general-purpose assistants already do not represent themselves as behavioral health providers. The amendments do not modify the requirement that this notice be provided at the beginning of each use, preserving the same disruptive user experience concerns.

Overbroad requirements risk pushing AI products out of Maryland

Faced with the choice between retrofitting every product with behavioral health compliance infrastructure or withdrawing from a single state market, many developers will choose the latter. The bill's \$1,000,000 per-violation penalty reinforces that calculus: for a general-purpose AI tool processing millions of interactions, the liability exposure of serving Maryland consumers may simply outweigh the cost of leaving. The residents who lose access first are those who depend on free or low-cost AI tools for schoolwork, accessibility, and daily tasks.

While the amended bill shifts violations into the Maryland Consumer Protection Act framework, it still preserves significant enforcement authority and liability exposure that will weigh heavily on developers considering whether to operate in the state.

We support the principle that AI products should not deceive consumers into believing they are receiving care from a licensed professional, and we agree that AI systems designed for behavioral health conversations should include appropriate safety protocols. But those obligations should be scoped to the products that actually present the risk. For these reasons, **I respectfully urge you to oppose HB 883.** Applying behavioral health compliance requirements to all consumer AI would degrade the tools Maryland residents rely on daily without protecting those who need behavioral health support.

Even as amended, HB 883 fails to adopt a targeted, risk-based framework and instead maintains broad, one-size-fits-all requirements that will burden low-risk technologies.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the Committee on a more targeted approach.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aden H.", with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Aden Hizkias
Associate Policy Director