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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

SB39: Behavioral Health - Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics and Outpatient Mental Health Centers - Reimbursement Rates

Senate Finance Committee

March 3, 2026

SUPPORT

Background: SB39 would establish the Workgroup on Certified Behavioral Health Clinic Implementation and Rate Methodology in the Behavioral Health Administration; require the Maryland Department of Health to conduct a certain rate study of outpatient mental health centers in the State; and require the Department to increase the Maryland Medical Assistance Program reimbursement rate for outpatient mental health centers by 3% in fiscal years 2026 and 2027.

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. These behavioral health intervention services are incredibly helpful in enhancing patient wellbeing.

One in five Marylanders suffer from a mental health condition. As individuals seek out care for their needs, behavioral health providers are facing financial strain due to outdated and inadequate reimbursement rates. The goal of SB39 is to improve the financial sustainability and rate structure for key behavioral health services in Maryland, helping ensure providers can continue to deliver high-quality care. By establishing a formal workgroup under MDH to study and recommend a sustainable, transparent, cost-based rate methodology for CCBHCs and outpatient mental health centers, we will be one step closer to implementing sustainable rate reforms that ensure parity with physical health services and help maintain access to care.

The Jewish community historically takes communal responsibility for the vulnerable and underserved – this includes those in poverty; individuals with disabilities; victims of domestic violence, etc. Many of these individuals need readily accessible, high-quality mental and behavioral health services. **For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on SB39.**

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.