

TESTIMONY OF THE HONORABLE DR CASHENNA A CROSS

Councilwoman At Large City of Glenarden Maryland

Senate Bill 738 Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance Required Coverage Mobile Crisis and Crisis Stabilization

Position Favorable

Determination

After careful review of Senate Bill 738 and weighing it against my experience in municipal governance community safety and resident wellbeing the strongest and most defensible position is Favorable.

Why

As a municipal leader responsible for responding to real time community needs I have witnessed firsthand that many public safety calls are rooted in behavioral health crises rather than criminal activity. Local governments often become the first line of response when residents experience mental health emergencies yet municipalities frequently lack the tools and coordinated medical support necessary to stabilize individuals safely. Senate Bill 738 strengthens the system by ensuring coverage for mobile crisis and crisis stabilization services which allows trained professionals to intervene early reduce escalation and protect both residents and first responders.

From a municipal perspective early intervention reduces strain on law enforcement emergency departments and local budgets while improving outcomes for families. Coverage requirements also create consistency across insurance carriers which is critical for equitable access particularly for vulnerable populations who rely on the Maryland Medical Assistance Program.

Municipal governments depend on strong partnerships with state systems to maintain safe stable communities. When crisis response resources are accessible residents receive care instead of incarceration and communities experience improved trust in public institutions.

Areas for Continued Attention

While the legislation is strong implementation should ensure coordination with local jurisdictions clear communication pathways between mobile crisis teams and municipal public

safety agencies and adequate workforce capacity so response times meet community expectations.

Conclusion

Senate Bill 738 represents a responsible and forward looking investment in community stability public safety and health equity. For these reasons I respectfully urge a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted

The Honorable Dr Cashenna A Cross

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