

March 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.

SB549 represents a critical step forward in empowering patients and ensuring that their support systems are meaningfully integrated into the recovery process. This bill requires that facilities inform individuals of their rights to have family members or other authorized individuals participate in treatment team meetings and planning. By including a form for consent, this bill protects patient autonomy while encouraging the inclusion of trusted support systems.

By fostering collaboration between patients, their families and support systems, and treatment teams, SB549 promotes a holistic and effective approach to mental health care.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report.

Stephanie Slowly-Little  
Executive Director  
National Alliance on Mental Illness, Maryland

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