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Date: March 3, 2026

Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill: Senate Bill 39- Behavioral Health - Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics and Outpatient Mental Health Centers - Reimbursement Rates

Position: Favorable with Amendments

Gaudenzia offers this testimony in support of Senate Bill 39 (SB 39).

Gaudenzia was founded in 1968 by a conscientious group of community members who wanted to help themselves and each other overcome the challenges of drug and alcohol use. They soon learned that a collective group was much stronger than an individual, struggling alone. Over the next 55 years, Gaudenzia began serving those in need of treatment for substance use and co-occurring disorders, becoming one of the nation's first providers with programs designed to meet the needs of individuals with substance use or co-occurring disorders, including those diagnosed with HIV/AIDS or under criminal justice involvement. Today, Gaudenzia is one of the largest non-profit substance use and co-occurring disorders treatment providers in the northeast United States, serving Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and the Washington, D.C. areas. More information is available at www.gaudenzia.org.

A Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) is a specially designated clinic that provides a comprehensive range of mental health and substance use services. CCBHCs serve anyone who walks through the door, regardless of their diagnosis and insurance status. CCBHCs are nonprofit organizations or units of a local government behavioral health authority. They must provide nine types of services, either directly or by contracting with partner organizations, with an emphasis on providing 24-hour crisis care, evidence-based practices, care coordination with local primary care and hospital partners, and integration with physical health care. CCBHCs dramatically increase access to care, expand the states' capacity to address the overdose crisis, reduce mental health-related hospitalizations, help address the workforce shortage, and create innovative partnerships with law enforcement, schools, and hospitals to improve care.¹

SB 39 is intended to be the companion of House Bill 772 (HB 772) - Workgroup on Behavioral Health Rate Methodology Modernization – Establishment. HB 772 directs the Maryland Health Care Commission to establish a Workgroup that will develop transparent, cost-based reimbursement methodologies for CCBHC's and outpatient mental health centers (OMHCs). Gaudenzia is currently one of six behavioral health providers participating in the State's CCBHC federal demonstration grant program, and we believe in the efficacy of this treatment model. Already in the first two years of the demonstration grant, we have served 561 individuals at our CCBHC location in the Park Heights neighborhood of Baltimore City. By the end of the 5-year demonstration grant, we expect to serve 2,100 clients. SB 39, with conforming amendments to cross file HB 772, demonstrates continued support and intentional implementation of the CCBHC care model in Maryland, and builds on the momentum of behavioral health providers who are committed to the CCBHC treatment model.

For these reasons, Gaudenzia respectfully requests a favorable report with amendments on SB 39.

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¹ [What Is a CCBHC?](#)