



**Testimony on HB71
Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program Services - Reimbursement (Youth
Psychiatric Rehabilitation Parity Act of 2026)**

Health Committee
February 10, 2026

POSITION: UNFAVORABLE

My name is Suanne Blumberg, CEO at Upper Bay Counseling & Support Services. Upper Bay Counseling & Support Services has offered psychiatric rehabilitation programs (PRP) to youth and families across Cecil and Harford Counties for over 20 years.

While well-intentioned, HB71 does not offer a viable solution to the needs facing Maryland youth.

The bill triples the minimum required visits before a provider can be paid for serving a child but does not increase the reimbursement rate to compensate a provider for the increased level of effort. We would have to double our current staff at the least and increase administrative time with the increase in services rendered. At the same time, the bill increases the maximum number of visits ten-fold and, if the bill were amended to require per-visit payments, a ten-fold increase in expenditures is unsustainable in the state's behavioral health budget.

Make no mistake: Maryland needs urgent fixes to its youth mental health services. According to a national ranking, Maryland ranks 40th in the country for its children's mental health system. Work is underway to address that problem, and this Committee can support cost studies and service reforms in partnership with the Maryland Department of Health, rate reform for child welfare services, and implementation of the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) model.

But if you want to reform the children's mental health system in Maryland, HB71 is not the right vehicle. I ask you to make an unfavorable report on this bill.

Helping Individuals - Strengthening Families - Uniting Communities

Main Office, Outpatient,
Adult Rehabilitation, ACT & Intake Services
200 Booth Street
Elkton, MD 21921
410-996-5104
Admin: 410-996-3400
Fax: 410-996-5197
Toll Free 877-587-7750

Children's Services
71 Flint Drive
North East, MD 21901
410-620-7161
Fax: 410-620-7168

Outpatient and
Rehabilitation Services
626 Revolution Street
Havre de Grace, MD 21078
410-939-8744
Fax: 410-939-8748
Toll Free 866-939-8744