



GRASSROOTS CRISIS
INTERVENTION CENTER, INC.

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Testimony on HB1119
Health Occupations - Social Workers - Scopes of Practice
Health Committee
March 2, 2026

POSITION: OPPOSE

Grassroots provides 24-hour access to quality behavioral health, crisis intervention and homeless services to individual and family consumers in need. These are families, individuals and children who find themselves without a place to sleep. These are co-workers, schoolmates, friends and even family who may be contemplating suicide. These are members of the community who are experiencing a crisis and are seeking help, crisis intervention counseling, and sometimes a roof over their heads. We are a free, 24-hour resource serving children, adults and families throughout Central Maryland. As a leader in 24/7 crisis and homeless services, Grassroots is concerned that HB1119 will unintentionally destabilize Maryland's behavioral health workforce. The bill proposes sweeping alterations to the social work scope of practice. We are particularly alarmed by the removal of statutory language that allows advanced clinicians to initiate emergency evaluations for individuals in psychiatric distress. By removing the ability of LCSW-C clinicians to petition for emergency evaluations, the bill delays life-saving interventions in our communities. This change, coupled with the deletion of authority for addiction counseling, creates significant barriers to care.

We are deeply concerned that HB1119 will reduce the number of qualified professionals available to respond to mobile crises. For these reasons, we respectfully urge an unfavorable report. We would welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with you to ensure that any changes to social work practice reinforce, rather than weaken, our state's mental health infrastructure.

Sincerely,


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