

MARYLAND PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY



February 13, 2026

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The Honorable Heather Bagnall
Health Committee
241 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Support: House Bill 886: Certified Peer Recovery Specialists - Coverage Under the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance and Workgroup on Certification

Dear Chairwoman Bagnall & Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) and the Washington Psychiatric Society (WPS) are state medical organizations whose physician members specialize in diagnosing, treating, and preventing mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty-five years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, both organizations work to ensure available, accessible, and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens and strive through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branches of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland, MPS/WPS represent over 1200 psychiatrists and physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPS/WPS support House Bill 886: Certified Peer Recovery Specialists - Coverage Under the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance and Workgroup on Certification. Peer Recovery Specialists (PRSs) are trained professionals with personal, lived experience in recovery from mental health disorders, substance use disorders, or both. They provide non-clinical, strength-based support, mentoring, and advocacy to help others navigate recovery, access community resources, and achieve personal wellness goals. They are often part of a multi-disciplinary teams and need to be reimbursed for their services. These specialists can be very helpful in helping patients with mental health disorders throughout their treatment. As such, MPS and WPS ask the committee for a favorable report on HB886.

If you have any questions regarding this testimony, please contact MPS lobbyist, Lisa Harris Jones at lisa.jones@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
The Maryland Psychiatric Society & Washington Psychiatric Society
Legislative Action Committee