

JAMILA J. WOODS  
Legislative District 26  
Prince George's County

Judiciary Committee  
Criminal Subcommittee  
Chair, Juvenile Subcommittee  
Public Safety Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony for HB995 - *Health Occupations - Behavioral Health Care Providers - Use of Artificial Intelligence***

**Good afternoon, Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and esteemed members of the Health Committee.**

My name is Delegate Jamila Woods, and I am here today to request a favorable report on House Bill 995, legislation to establish clear guardrails on the use of artificial intelligence in behavioral health care.

Technology is evolving rapidly, and artificial intelligence is increasingly being integrated into health care systems. While innovation can improve efficiency, we must be extremely cautious when it comes to behavioral health. Mental health treatment is deeply personal. It requires trust, clinical judgment, ethical responsibility, and human connection. House Bill 995 ensures that artificial intelligence does not replace that human relationship.

This bill draws a clear line. It prohibits behavioral health care providers from using artificial intelligence to provide behavioral health care to a patient. That includes assessment, diagnosis, treatment, counseling, development of treatment plans, case management, and therapeutic communication. In other words, AI cannot conduct therapy. It cannot make clinical decisions. It cannot replace the provider's judgment in interactions intended to diagnose, treat, or emotionally support a patient.

At the same time, HB995 recognizes that providers may use AI for limited administrative support tasks. The bill permits the use of AI for functions such as scheduling appointments, managing billing and records, organizing notes, or analyzing operational data. However, even in those circumstances, the provider must ensure compliance with federal and state confidentiality laws, sign agreements to protect patient information, and ensure that protected health information is not used to train the AI system. The provider must also independently review any report or data generated by the system to ensure accuracy.

Importantly, the bill requires transparency. If a system that employs artificial intelligence could materially affect clinical decision-making or patient-facing services, the provider must obtain written informed consent from the patient. Patients must also receive written and verbal notice if AI is being used for administrative tasks and be informed of potential risks, including the possibility of a breach of confidentiality.

Behavioral health patients often share their most vulnerable thoughts, trauma histories, and emotional struggles. The idea that these interactions could be analyzed, stored, or processed by

artificial intelligence systems without clear consent and oversight raises serious ethical concerns. This legislation prioritizes patient autonomy, confidentiality, and the integrity of the therapeutic relationship.

House Bill 995 does not prohibit the dissemination of self-help or educational materials. It does not block innovation. Instead, it ensures that innovation does not outpace ethics, patient safety, or professional responsibility.

This bill affirms a simple principle: technology may assist, but it must not replace the human care that behavioral health treatment requires.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on House Bill 995.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jamila J. Woods". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

**Delegate Jamila J. Woods**  
Maryland House of Delegates  
District 26 – Prince George’s County