

Testimony for HB 1483

Clinical Professional Counseling - Out-of-State Providers - Use of Telehealth for Continuity of Care

March 11, 2026

Support with Amendment

Thank you Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and all the members of the Health Committee for addressing this important issue of continuity of behavioral health telehealth services for Maryland's citizens. As dean of the University of Maryland, School of Social Work, I appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony for this important issue to improve continuity and access to behavioral health care.

HB1483 would allow temporary mental and behavioral health therapy by an out-of-state provider without licensure in Maryland to be provided to a client in Maryland for up to 6 months. The purpose of the bill is to allow continuity of care for mental and behavioral health needs with a trusted therapist when a client moves to or returns to Maryland. Continuing care with the same therapist during times of transition has consistently been linked to better mental-health outcomes, lower crisis service use, and improved functioning. HB 1483 addresses protection of the public by establishing a requirement that the temporary out-of-state provider is licensed and in good-standing in another state.

The following mental and behavioral health providers are included in HB1483: clinical alcohol and drug counselors; clinical marriage and family therapists; clinical professional art therapists; clinical professional counselors; and graduate students in training for one of the listed disciplines practicing under a licensed supervisor. Importantly, clinical social workers were not included in the list of mental and behavioral health providers. Social workers are among the largest provider groups delivering behavioral health services. To omit social workers will result in a disparity of care that is dependent on WHO is providing the therapeutic services. In addition, the omission of social workers and graduate social work students from the list of providers undermines the state's recruitment efforts by providing an advantage to other mental and behavioral health disciplines in Maryland law. Prospective students may view social work as a less prestigious, marketable, or nationally flexible degree.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that licensed social workers and graduate students in social work practicing under a licensed supervisor" are added to the list of behavioral health providers who may offer telehealth services for up to 6 months to afford the continuity of care extended to their recipients of behavioral health care. By also amending Md. Health Occupations Code Ann. § 19-101 and § 19-301 (Social Workers) this continuity of care will reach more individuals in need of behavioral health services and recognize the important contribution of social workers.

I respectfully request a favorable committee report on HB 1483, with the amendment offered.

Respectfully submitted by,



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