



**Montgomery County Federation of Families for
Children’s Mental Health, Inc.**

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**Testimony Presented Before the House Health and Government Operations Committee
Hearing on the HB 1140: Health – Mobile Response and Stabilization System for
Children and Families in Maryland – Study
Wednesday, March 4, 2020**

SUPPORT

My name is Celia Serkin. I am the Executive Director of the Montgomery County Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health, a family and youth support organization providing assistance to parents and other primary caregivers who are raising children or youth with behavioral health challenges. We also provide youth peer support services to youth and young adults with mental health challenges who are partially or fully disconnected, that is, they are struggling in school or with employment or are not in school and not working. I am a parent of two children, now adults, who have behavioral health challenges.

The Montgomery County Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health supports HB 1140. In his letter of information concerning SB 624, Robert R. Neall, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Health, states, “Expanding the crisis service network statewide has been a key focus of the Lt. Governor’s Commission to Study Mental and Behavioral Health in Maryland. . . . Concurrently, the Department has engaged in a substantial stakeholder-driven process to redesign the Behavioral health system of care in Maryland.” The Maryland Department of Health is well-positioned to apply for a SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) system of care grant to fuel existing efforts to design a statewide mobile response and crisis system for children and youth and families. Subject matter experts are at the University of Maryland, School of Social Work and can assist the Department in exploring strategies to finance Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) and determining the return on investment as children and youth are diverted from the higher intensity of services, such as inpatient hospitalizations and residential care, and hospitalizations are decreased.

Thank you for your interest in children's mobile response and stabilization and for your commitment to children, youth and young adults with behavioral health challenges and their families in Maryland. We support HB 1140.