



February 5, 2020

The Honorable Anne R. Kaiser
House Ways & Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support – HB 277: State Department of Education - Guidelines on Trauma-Informed Approach

Dear Chairman Kaiser and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) is a state medical organization whose physician members specialize in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, MPS works to ensure available, accessible and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens; and strives through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branch of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland excluding the D.C. suburbs, MPS represents over 700 psychiatrists as well as physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPS supports House Bill 277 (HB 277) as many Maryland children are all too often the victims of trauma, which may impact both their mental health as well as their functioning in school as well. Unfortunately, these children also do not receive the mental health treatment that they need. Trauma-Informed Schools Initiative established under HB 277 is a positive step for the state to take as it would aid Maryland schools in identifying children who are the victims of trauma as well as help these children and their families access meaningful mental health treatment.

MPS, therefore, asks the committee to give HB 277 a favorable report. If you have any questions with regard to this testimony, please feel free to contact Thomas Tompsett Jr. at tommy.tompsett@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully submitted,
The Legislative Action Committee for the Maryland Psychiatric Society.