



Committee: Senate Finance Committee
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Bill Number: Senate Bill 286
Title: Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services - Modifications
Hearing Date: February 9, 2021
Position: Support

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *Senate Bill 286 – Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services - Modifications*. This bill makes changes to the existing crisis response grant program and expands annual funding.

LCPCM was pleased to support enacting legislation in 2018, creating the crisis response grant program and establishing initial funding through fiscal year 2022. Crisis response funding ensures individuals across the lifespan can access appropriate services at the time of a behavioral health crisis. During a crisis, individuals without access to crisis services in their community are most often left with one option - to go to an emergency room, where they may be required to wait for hours, and sometimes days, for appropriate services to be identified.

As the State tries to identify additional strategies to address increased demand for behavioral health services during the COVID health crisis, including an increase in suicide and opioid-related deaths, we must ensure that individuals can access behavioral health services now and in the future.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Rachael faulkner at rfaulkner@policypartners.net or 410-693-4000.