



House Health & Government Operations Committee

March 4, 2021

Support for House Bill 1287

Man Alive is the first established opioid treatment program in the State of Maryland and the second in the country. From our inception, we have been located in Baltimore City. I am writing on behalf of the staff, patients and Board of Directors at Man Alive in urging the EHEA Committee to rule favorably on this bill. It allows Alcohol and Drug Trainee (ADT) counselors to continue the provision of telehealth counseling after the current Public Health Emergency is lifted.

Since the outset of this pandemic, we have been operating continually to provide the essential services needed for our patients. The wisdom of granting us approval to conduct telehealth was a life-saving measure. As we all coped with isolation and uncertainties, the connection between our patients and counselors was essential. For the patients to know they have a scheduled appointment to talk with their counselors became a very important constant in their life.

I'm confident some of the patients will welcome face-to-face contacts but the option for telehealth will provide one more tool for ongoing recovery.

This bill will permit ADT counselors to continue to provide telehealth counseling while working for licensed substance use disorder programs. To the end, we strongly support this bill.

Respectfully,

Karen Reese

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Executive Director