



Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Mid-Atlantic States, Inc  
2101 East Jefferson Street  
Rockville, Maryland 20852

February 25, 2021

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass  
Health and Government Operations Committee  
House Office Building Room 240  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: HB 915 – Support with Amendments**

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Committee:

Kaiser Permanente is pleased to support HB 915 – “Workgroup on Black, Latino and Other Underrepresented Mental Health Professionals” and requests an amendment to add representatives of the payor community to the workgroup.

Kaiser Permanente is the largest private integrated health care delivery system in the United States, delivering health care to over 12 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia.<sup>1</sup> Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States, which operates in Maryland, provides and coordinates complete health care services for approximately 775,000 members. In Maryland, we deliver care to over 450,000 members.

Kaiser Permanente believes that employing a diverse workforce is essential in providing quality and comprehensive health care to our community. A multicultural society mandates care delivery that meets the demands of unique mental health conditions. Creating such a task force enables an opportunity to address various population-specific characteristics and distinctive mental health needs. People within these populations also have varying individual characteristics and needs that differ from those of other members of the same group. This variability intensifies the innately formidable responsibility of ensuring effective care for our mentally challenged. Based on this premise, this proposed resource will accomplish a two-fold mission in confronting the disparity that exists as well as assisting our health system in expanding the capacity to offer culturally sensitive care to those in need of mental health services.

We believe the workgroup could benefit from the addition of payor representatives. Including payor perspectives in the discussions around provider shortages and provider recruitment will provide meaningful and substantive insight that will enrich this critical work. To that end, we offer the amendment below.

Kaiser Permanente urges a favorable report on HB 915.

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<sup>1</sup> Kaiser Permanente comprises Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., the nation’s largest not-for-profit health plan, and its health plan subsidiaries outside California and Hawaii; the not-for-profit Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, which operates 39 hospitals and over 650 other clinical facilities; and the Permanente Medical Groups, self-governed physician group practices that exclusively contract with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and its health plan subsidiaries to meet the health needs of Kaiser Permanente’s members.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact Allison Taylor at Allison.W.Taylor@kp.org or (202) 924-7496 with questions.

Sincerely,



Allison W. Taylor  
Director of Government Relations  
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Mid-Atlantic States, Inc.

AMENDMENT TO HB 915  
(First Reading File Bill)

On page 2, in line 5, strike “and”; in line 6, after “State”, insert:

“(iv) one representative of a nonprofit health service plan;

(v) one representative of a nonprofit group model health maintenance organization;

(vi) one representative of an insurer; and

(vii) one representative of a managed care organization”.