



Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 12

Title: Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services and Public Safety Answering Points – Modifications

Hearing Date: January 25, 2022

Position: Support

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *Senate Bill 12 – Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services and Public Safety Answering Points – Modifications*. This bill seeks to reduce unnecessary law enforcement involvement in incidents where individuals are experiencing a behavioral health crisis.

LCPCM supports this bill because law enforcement has been the default response to incidents involving behavioral health crises for many years. However, we recognize that many of these incidents could be resolved better if addressed with a more clinical focus, for example, by mobile crisis teams. In addition to grants to help support crisis response infrastructure, this bill also ensures that 9-1-1 operators have the necessary resources to address a call from a person in a behavioral health crisis. 9-1-1 operators are often the first to interact with a person in crisis or their family. We must equip these operators with the resources needed to handle these difficult calls.

We urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 12. If we can provide any further information, please contact Scott Tiffin at stiffin@policypartners.net.