



**House Bill 935 Health and Health Insurance - Behavioral Health Services - Expansion
(Behavioral Health System Modernization Act)**

Health and Government Operations Committee

March 9, 2022

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

The MidAtlantic Business Group on Health (MABGH) is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization of human resource professionals working at mid-size to large companies. The mission of the organization is to help these professionals maximize the value of the healthcare their employees and dependents receive. As a part of that effort, we are also leading the MidAtlantic Mental Health Path Forward, in collaboration with mental health advocates, providers of care, and a wide range of stakeholders. <https://www.mhamd.org/pathforward/>

Company Human Resource professionals are acutely affected by the current mental health crisis, which has certainly been exacerbated by the pandemic. Every day, employees contact human resources in search of mental health help for themselves or a family member. Even though employees have coverage, there are no in-network providers with appointments.

HB 935 can help. This bill will expand the availability of better quality mental health services, and improve the quality of those services. MABGH interest centers largely around the work on Measurement-Based Care and Collaborative Care included in the bill.

1. Measurement-based care. In virtually every other type of health care, a base-line measure is established, and treatment progress is measured against established metrics. Blood pressure numbers are a good example. This is not always the case in Mental Health services, even though evidence proves that the use of measurement-based care in Mental Health improves outcomes significantly. And more effective care alleviates the strain on the system.
2. Collaborative care. The lion's share of Mental Health services is delivered in the Primary Care Physician's office, yet PCPs are not extensively trained to deliver that treatment. Collaborative care enables PCPs to connect with Behavioral Health specialists on a consultative basis, and pays both parties for this treatment relationship. Collaborative care not only mitigates demand on already-strained behavioral health specialists, it has also been shown to improve outcomes.

The need for EFFECTIVE behavioral health care is higher than ever. MABGH urges this committee to pas HB 935.

John Miller
Executive Director