



March 7, 2022

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
House Health & Government Operations Committee
House Office Building – Room 241
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support – HB Bill 1160: Mental Health Law – Reform of Laws and Delivery of Service

Dear Chairman Pendergrass and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) and the Washington Psychiatric Society (WPS) are state medical organizations whose physician members specialize in diagnosing, treating, and preventing mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty-five years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, both organizations work to ensure available, accessible, and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens; and strive through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branches of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland, MPS and WPS represent over 1000 psychiatrists and physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPS/WPS support House Bill 1160: Mental Health Law – Reform of Laws and Delivery of Service (HB 1160), but seek amendments to the bill to bring clarity to the Administrative Law Judges who too narrowly interpret the current law and thus routinely struggle to uniformly apply the current standards. MPS/WPS, therefore, suggest the following amendments:

Amendment 1

On page 2, in line 25 strike “WILL”.

On page 2, strike in their entirety lines 26 through 27, inclusive, and substitute “PRESENTS A DANGER TO THE INDIVIDUAL’S OWN LIFE OR SAFETY OR THE LIFE OR SAFETY OF ANOTHER;”.

Amendment 2

On page 2, in line 28 after “(2)” insert “WILL”; in that same line strike, “UNABLE” and substitute “SUBSTANTIALLY IMPAIRED”; and in that same line, strike “TO PROVIDE” and substitute “IN PROVIDING.”

On page 2, strike beginning with “PERSISTENCE” in line 30 down through “HALLUCINATIONS” in line 31 and substitute “EFFECTS OF MENTAL ILLNESS”.



**Washington
Psychiatric Society**

Amendment 3

On page 2, in line 32 after (3) insert "WILL".

On page 2 and 3, strike beginning with "PROVIDED" in line 33 on page 2 down through "TREATMENT" in line 2 on page 3.

With the above amendments adopted, MPS/WPS asks this committee for a favorable report on HB 1160 for all the reasons noted above. If you have any questions with regard to this testimony, please feel free to contact Thomas Tompsett Jr. at tommy.tompsett@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully submitted,
The Maryland Psychiatric Society and the Washington Psychiatric Society
Legislative Action Committee