

March 9, 2022

Testimony on House Bill 935
House Bill 935 Health and Health Insurance - Behavioral Health Services - Expansion
(Behavioral Health System Modernization Act)
House Health and Government Operations Committee

Position: Favorable

Maryland Nonprofits is a statewide association of more than 1400 nonprofit organizations and institutions. As a member of the Behavioral Health Coalition, we urge you to support House Bill 935 to adopt reforms and enhancements to meet the increasing needs for high quality mental health and substance use care.

The need for quality and accessible mental health and substance use care has never been higher, and this is particularly true for Marylanders who because of location, low incomes or other social or racial inequities are less able to access or afford care privately.

House Bill 935 will increase comprehensive community-based treatment by expanding Maryland's network of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics. It will improve health outcomes and treatment quality by increasing the use of measurement-based care in behavioral health and primary care settings.

House Bill 935 will strengthen the over-burdened and COVID-stressed behavioral health workforce by expanding resources for peer support networks and peer recovery specialists. And it will benefit families and communities by improving care for children and youth by increasing the availability of home- and community-based wraparound services and reducing reliance on law enforcement and emergency departments by ensuring stable reimbursement for crisis response services.

The demand and need for behavioral health care are at an all-time high. The enhancements in this bill are needed now more than ever.

We urge you to give House Bill 935 a favorable report.