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jamesplaceinc.org

committed to bringing support to those battling addiction

February 13, 2023

Senate Bill 362 Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics – Established

Senate Finance Committee

February 14, 2023

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

Greetings, I'm Barbara Allen, Executive Director of James' Place Inc. a nonprofit that supports those needing recovery supports for substance use and mental health disorders. I do this work in memory of my son, Jim, brothers Bill and Tom and niece, Amanda, who lost their lives to co-occurring substance and mental health disorders. Through my advocacy work for James' Place Inc. I've met thousands of folks working towards recovery as well as thousands of family members who have buried their loved ones.

SB 362 will increase access to comprehensive community based mental health and substance use care by expanding Maryland's network of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs).

CCBHCs are federally designated, proven models that provide a comprehensive range of outpatient mental health and substance use treatment, care coordination with other providers and services, and connection to other systems and supports. They are based on the federally qualified health center (FQHC) model, providing services regardless of insurance status or ability to pay.

CCBHCs must provide nine core services, including services for children and youth, 24/7 crisis intervention, peer supports, substance use treatment, and primary health screening and monitoring. States that have implemented the model broadly have seen increased access to care, reductions in emergency department and inpatient utilization, a mitigation of behavioral health workforce challenges, higher engagement post discharge from hospitals, improved utilization of medication assisted treatment for opioid use disorders, and improved integration with physical care.



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Since the deaths of my loved ones I've learned so much about what might have enhanced, prolonged and perhaps saved their lives. I watched them spiral in and out of various types of care with no continuity, no referrals when unknown issues arose including unresolved trauma. When I learned about CCBHCs, I knew this must be the next level of hope for those who suffer and those like myself who would prefer to grow old with our loved ones.

This bill will improve behavioral health outcomes, save money, and keep people out of crisis. **For these reasons, I, along with James' Place Inc. urge this committee to pass SB 362.**

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara L. Allen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Executive Director

***James' Place Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.
All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.***