



March 6, 2024

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and distinguished members of the Ways and Means Committee,

NAMI Maryland and our 11 local affiliates across the state represent a network of more than 58,000 families, individuals, community-based organizations, and service providers. NAMI Maryland is a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to providing education, support, and advocacy for people living with mental illnesses, their families, and the wider community.

NAMI MD believes that public policies and practices should promote greater awareness and early identification of mental health conditions and substance abuse disorders. Since programming related to heroin and opioid addiction prevention is already being taught in public schools, the mitigating effects of naloxone and/or other opioid reversal medications should be discussed as well. This also applies to institutions of higher education.

We shouldn't utilize scare tactics when we educate about substance abuse disorder. Instead, we should offer education that removes barriers and stigma.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report.

Kathryn S. Farinholt
Executive Director
National Alliance on Mental Illness, Maryland

Contact: Morgan Mills
Compass Government Relations
Mmills@compassadvocacy.com