



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

TREATING OUR FAMILY AND YOURS



TO: Members of the Maryland State Senate Finance Committee

FROM: Maryland Association of Osteopathic Physicians
American Osteopathic Association

DATE: February 27, 2018

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 858

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the Maryland Association of Osteopathic Physicians (MAOP) are writing regarding SB 858. This bill requires insurance coverage for health care services delivered by local health departments, including behavioral health services. It also updates the network adequacy requirements for access plans that insurers are required to file with the Insurance Commissioner. The AOA and MAOP support expanding access to behavioral health care services for Maryland patients, and would like to offer several comments which we believe will help ensure patient access to timely, high-quality care.

The AOA represents 137,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and medical students, promotes public health, encourages scientific research, serves as the primary certifying body for DOs and is the accrediting agency for osteopathic medical schools. More information on DOs/osteopathic medicine can be found at www.osteopathic.org. MAOP is a professional medical organization that represents over 1,100 DOs providing patient care in Maryland.

The AOA and MAOP support insurance coverage for behavioral health care services provided through local health departments. This coverage will allow patients to access care for mental health and substance abuse issues without undue burden or delay. We are concerned, however, with current access plan requirements which allow insurers to use telemedicine to meet network adequacy standards. Not all health care services can be delivered safely and appropriately via telemedicine, and as such, it should be used to complement, but not replace, requirements that insurers maintain an adequate network of in-person providers.

The AOA and MAOP thank you for your consideration of our comments regarding SB 858. Should you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Raine Richards, JD, Director, State Government Affairs at r-richards@osteopathic.org or (312) 202-8199.

Sincerely,

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Brian Kahan, DO
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