



Support

Senate Finance Committee
House Bill 1474 – Licensed Professional Counselors – Telehealth – Students Enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education

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On behalf of the member institutions of the Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA) and the nearly 55,000 students we serve, I thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony in support with amendments of [*House Bill 1474 – Licensed Professional Counselors – Telehealth – Students Enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education*](#). This bill authorizes an out-of-state licensed professional counselor to provide clinical professional counseling services through telehealth to nonresident students enrolled in an institution of higher education in the State. Currently, out-of-state students cannot continue with their pre-existing provider relationship unless they are physically within the borders of the home state.

The Covid-19 situation adjusted the learning environment for higher education students and came with unprecedented stressors. The Coronavirus pandemic shifted traditional healthcare delivery to allow for the expansion of telemedicine; students could stay connected to appropriate services when in need. During the pandemic, MICUA institutions provided student support services via telehealth. Some of these support services included virtual wellness programs to deal with issues related to depression, anxiety, relationship problems, substance abuse, academic challenges, social pressures, loss, and many others. Telehealth is a good resource for college and university students to access health care providers while they are home.

Becoming a college student invites a myriad of emotions such as anxiety, excitement, confusion, joy, etc. Allowing non-resident students to maintain the behavioral healthcare relationships they had at home would ensure continuity of care and access to services covered under existing health insurance. This would be a substantial benefit to students accessing mental health care services. MICUA institutions appreciate the intended impact and utility of HB 1474.

MICUA supports HB 1474 as amended by the House Health and Government and Operations Committee.

If you have any questions, please contact Irnande Altema (ialtema@micua.org), Associate Vice President for Government and Business Affairs.

For all of these reasons, MICUA requests the Committee support as amended for House Bill 1474.