May 14, 2020

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: FY 2021 Medicaid Provider Rates

Dear Governor Hogan,

The signatory organizations and the families and individuals we serve want to thank you for your leadership during this crisis and for the support you have provided the health care community throughout your Administration. We applaud these efforts and request your continued support by ensuring that the Fiscal Year 2021 budget contains the mandatory 4% rate increase designated for community behavioral health, developmental disabilities, complex medical needs, and senior care services.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many providers in the behavioral health, developmental disability, medically complex, and senior care communities were at a crossroads. Due to chronic underfunding coupled with rising costs, providers were either operating in the negative or with very small margins. Unlike other businesses that can pass added costs on to consumers, these programs do not have this option. The Marylanders they serve are either on Medicaid, which reimburses at a set rate that must be used to cover all expenses; receive subsidies through the State grant program; or pay out-of-pocket on fixed incomes and cannot afford higher fees.

As is the case with hospitals and other essential service providers, these professionals have been upended by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is unclear how these community organizations will withstand this challenge and whether the provider network will be sufficiently robust to meet a steady or increased demand for critical services after this crisis has passed. Providing the full 4% rate increase in the Fiscal Year 2021 budget is essential for the ongoing viability of these provider organizations and for the health and safety of the individuals they serve. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated a workforce crisis that was near a breaking point before the outbreak. Adequate service rates are essential to maintaining skilled staff in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis and in ensuring there will be sufficient staffing levels to serve our friends and family members post-crisis.

We appreciate the budget challenges the State will face going forward and understand that there will undoubtedly be reductions in current budget allocations for Fiscal Year 2021. However, we collectively request that as you move forward with your budget evaluation and decision making there remains a commitment to maintain the full 4% rate increase for these essential services. It is not only the viability of the provider community that is at stake but also the State’s ability to continue to reduce unnecessary emergency department and inpatient utilization throughout the pandemic and beyond. This public health emergency has made it clear that critical health care services must not be taken for granted or jeopardized by lack of sufficient funding. Seniors, people with complex medical needs and developmental disabilities, and those who rely on behavioral health services, will have nowhere to turn if budget cuts decimate these vital services.
Sincerely,

Abilities Network  
Adventist HealthCare Behavioral Health and Wellness Services  
Alzheimer’s Association of Greater Maryland  
Appalachian Crossroads  
Archway Station  
Ardmore Enterprises  
Arrow Child & Family Services  
Arundel Lodge  
Aspire Wellness Center, Inc.  
Athelas Institute  
Baltimore City Substance Abuse Directorate  
Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc.  
Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition  
Behavioral Health Partners of Frederick  
Behavioral Health System Baltimore  
Bello Machre  
Benedictine  
Board of Child Care  
CALMRA  
Calvert County Behavioral Health  
Caroline Center  
Carroll Co. Youth Svc Bureau  
Catholic Charities  
Catholic Charities of Baltimore  
Center for Children  
Center for Social Change  
Cerentiy, Inc.  
Channel Marker  
Charles Co. Freedom Landing  
Chesapeake Care Resources  
Chesapeake Center  
Chesapeake Home Health Care  
CHI  
Chimes, Inc.  
Community Connections  
Community Living, Inc.  
Community Options  
Community Residences  
Companions, Inc.  
Compass  
Cornerstone Montgomery  
Corsica River Mental Health Services  
Creative Options, Inc.  
Crossroads Community  
Delmarva Community Services  
Eastern Shore Behavioral Health Coalition  
Maryland Association of Adult Day Services  
Maryland Association of Community Services  
Maryland Coalition of Families  
Maryland Coalition on Mental Health and Aging  
Maryland Community Connection  
Maryland Inclusive Housing Corporation  
Maryland Psychiatric Society  
Maryland Rural Health Association  
Maryland Senior Citizen Action Network  
Maryland-DC Society of Addiction Medicine  
Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association  
MedSource Community Services  
Mental Health Association of Maryland  
Mentor Network  
Mid Shore Behavioral Health  
Mid-Atlantic Human Service Corp.  
Mosaic Community Services  
National Alliance on Mental Illness, Maryland  
National Association of Social Workers, Maryland Chapter  
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Maryland Chapter  
NCIA  
New Horizons Supported Services, Inc.  
NorthStar Special Services, Inc.  
Omni House, Inc.  
On Our Own of Maryland  
Parker Psychiatric Services Inc  
Pathways, Inc.  
PDG Rehabilitation Services, Inc.  
Penn-Mar Human Services  
People Encouraging People  
Powell Recovery Center  
Pressley Ridge  
Progress Unlimited, Inc.  
Prologue, Inc.  
Providence Unlimited  
Psychotherapeutic Treatment Services, Inc.  
Ray of Hope  
Regeneration Project  
Rehabilitation Systems, Inc.  
Resource Connections Inc.  
Richcroft  
San Mar Children's Home  
Service Coordination, Inc.  
Shared Support Maryland
EBED Community Improvement
eMerge
EPIC
EveryMind, Inc.
Families First Counseling
Family Services Foundation
Family Services, Inc.
Flying Colors of Success
Forward Visions
Friends Aware
Gallagher Services
Garrett County Lighthouse
Goodwill Ind. of the Chesapeake (STEP)
Goodwill Industries of Monocacy Valley
Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work
Harford Belair Community Mental Health Center
Head Injury Rehabilitation and Referral Services
Hope Health Systems
Horizon Foundation of Howard County
Humanim
Inspired Options Inc.
Institute for Behavior Resources
Itineris
Jewish Community Services
JSSA
Jubilee Association of Maryland
Key Point Health Services
L.I.F.E. Inc.
La Clinica del Pueblo
Langton Green
Latter Rain
Leading By Example, LLC
Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland
Life Renewal Services
LifeSpan Network
Linwood Center
Lourie Center
Lower Shore Clinic
Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy Institute
Maryland Addictions Directors Council
Maryland Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence

Sheppard Pratt Health Systems
Shura
Somerset Community Services
Southern Maryland Community Network
Spectrum Support
Spring Dell Center
St. Peter’s Adult Learning Center
Star Community
Sunrise Community of Maryland
Target Community
The Arc Baltimore
The Arc Carroll County
The Arc Central Chesapeake Region
The Arc Maryland
The Arc Montogmery County
The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region
The Arc of Frederick County
The Arc of Howard County
The Arc Prince George's County
The Arc Southern Maryland
The Arc Washington County
The Center for Life Enrichment
The Children's Guild
The Coordinating Center
The Harford Center
The League for People with Disabilities
The Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition
The Mental Health Center of Western MD
The National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, Maryland/DC Chapter
The Prince George’s County Provider Council
The Rock Creek Foundation
Therapeutic Living for Families
Thrive Behavioral Health, LLC
UMMC - Div. Community Psychiatry
Unified Community Connections
United Community Supports of Maryland
Upper Bay Counseling & Support Svcs
Vesta, Inc.
Volunteers of America/Chesapeake
Way Station, Inc.
Wicomico Co. Health Dept.
WIN Family Services, Inc.
Work Opportunities Unlimited

cc: Boyd K. Rutherford, Lieutenant Governor, State of Maryland
    Robert R. Neall, Secretary, Maryland Department of Health
    David R. Brinkley, Secretary, Maryland Department of Budget and Management
    Diane M. Croghan, Deputy Chief of Staff, Governor’s Office