

Sayers, Margery

From: Holmes, Ayesha <aholmes@strength.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 9:55 AM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: Checking in about tonight's meeting
Attachments: Testimony to LBHAB.docx

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Hi there,

I'm just checking in to make sure my online registration went through for tonight's Council meeting. Also, I couldn't seem to figure out how to put in a written copy of testimony. I hope it's ok to send it through you. I've attached it. I you prefer me to send it another way just let me know how!

Hope you are well and staying safe!
Ayesha

AYESHA B. HOLMES, MS

Director
Maryland No Kid Hungry

She/Her/Hers/Herself

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To: Howard County Council

From: Ayesha B. Holmes

Date: 1/19/21

RE: Appointment to LBHAB

My name is Ayesha Bajwa Holmes, and I reside in Sykesville, Maryland. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to present testimony. As a long time, resident of Howard County, my goal is to serve the County as a voice for those living with behavioral health needs so that all people may thrive, regardless of challenges they may face. For the past 25 years I have worked in the field of behavioral health, as an outreach worker, case manager, program director and executive director. I have seen the impact of good and bad policy on the programs and the lives of those needing services.

Also, I have personally had the opportunity to witness when things go well! I hope that my experiences both personal, as a family member of someone who is finally thriving in spite of a mental health disorder, and as a professional will enable me to serve effectively as a member of the Local Behavioral Health Advisory Board. In my past position, as the Executive Director of Grassroots, I worked closely with our team members to provide services to both the population of Howard County experiencing homelessness and those in need of behavioral health crisis services, including suicide prevention and treatment for substance misuse. Prior to Grassroots, I ran the Statewide Care Management Entity serving over 500 youth with serious mental health needs. Through a promising practice, known as High Fidelity Wraparound, our program was able to successfully divert youth from being placed in residential treatment or detention. The success rate for diversion was 94%. Both of these positions allowed me to serve in meaningful ways and learn the processes that lead to success.

Those living with behavioral health needs must be able to access services in an equitable manner with as much dignity and care as any other medical service. As we move forward with the thinking about what behavioral health care is, we must examine the data to understand what is working, and to learn how to improve the areas that are lagging. In this examination, we must also keep a keen eye on the quality of the experience, the need to reduce stigma and ensure quick and efficient access to necessary and in many cases, life saving services.

I look forward to serving along side my fellow members and with the Howard County Behavioral Health Authority.

Sayers, Margery

From: joel hurewitz <joelhurewitz@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 7:04 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CR4-2021 Local Behavior Health Advisory Board Misapplies the State Law

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Council,

I believe that the 4-year term in CR4-2021 is a misapplication of the State law and in conflict with the recently amended Charter.

The Local Behavior Health Advisory Board is a body under § 8-1001(b). Thus, § 8-1001(c) does not apply ("**Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section**"). Which means that the 4-year term in § 8-1001(d) is not applicable ("Term. -- (1) The term of a member **appointed under subsection (c) of this section is 4 years**"); the 4-year term does not apply to a body under § 8-1001(b).

Furthermore, if the State law 4-year term had been applicable, then the existing members of the Local Behavior Health Advisory Board would not have 5-year terms as stated on the Board's website: "The HCLBHA Board will include a total of 28 members: 18 are appointed members for five-year terms." Thus, it is also unclear how a new 4-year term arose for a board that was only created in 2018.

The Administration and County Solicitor have not responded to multiple attempts to clarify these issues.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Joel Hurewitz

- [MD - Annotated Code of Maryland](#)
- [HEALTH - GENERAL](#)
- [TITLE 8. SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS LAW.](#)
- [SUBTITLE 10. LOCAL DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE COUNCILS](#)

§ 8-1001. In general

(a) Established. -- Each county shall have a local drug and alcohol abuse council.

(b) Designation of certain bodies as council. -- On application from a county, the Governor or the Governor's designee may designate a county criminal justice coordinating council, substance abuse advisory council, or other agency or organization as the local drug and alcohol abuse council for that county.

(c) Composition. -- Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, a local drug and alcohol abuse council shall consist of the following individuals:

- (1) The health officer of the local health department, or the health officer's designee;
- (2) The director of the local department of social services, or the director's designee;
- (3) The Regional Director of the Department of Juvenile Services, or the Director's designee;
- (4) The Regional Director of the Division of Parole and Probation, or the Director's designee;

- (5) The State's Attorney for the county, or the State's Attorney's designee;
- (6) The district public defender for the district in which the county is located, or the district public defender's designee;
- (7) The chief of the county police department, if the county has a police force, or the sheriff, if the county does not have a police force, or that individual's designee;
- (8) The president of the local board of education, or the president's designee;
- (9) A representative of the county executive, the Mayor of Baltimore City, or the county commissioners or county council in counties with no county executive, as appropriate;
- (10) For charter counties and in Baltimore City, a representative of the county council or the city council in Baltimore City, appointed by the chairperson or president of the county council or city council;
- (11) The county administrative judge of the circuit court for the county, or the judge's designee;
- (12) The administrative judge of the district court for that district, or the judge's designee; and
- (13) The following individuals appointed by the county executive, the Mayor of Baltimore City, or the county commissioners or county council in counties with no county executive, as appropriate:
 - (i) At least one recipient of addictions treatment services;
 - (ii) Two substance abuse providers, at least one of whom has experience with services to individuals with co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders;
 - (iii) At least one substance abuse prevention provider;
 - (iv) At least one individual who is knowledgeable and active on substance abuse issues that affect the county;
 - (v) The superintendent, warden, or director of the local correctional facility located in the county or in Baltimore City the warden of the Baltimore City Detention Center; and
 - (vi) At least one other individual who is knowledgeable about treatment of substance abuse in the county, including members of civic organizations, the chamber of commerce, health care professional organizations, or the clergy.

(d) Term. --

- (1) The term of a member appointed under subsection (c) of this section is 4 years.
- (2) The terms of members are staggered as required by the terms provided for members of the council on July 1, 2004.
- (3) At the end of a term, a member continues to serve until a successor is appointed and qualifies.
- (4) A member who is appointed after a term has begun serves only for the rest of the term and until a successor is appointed and qualifies.

(e) Duties. -- The local drug and alcohol abuse council shall:

- (1) Determine its own governing structure, including issues relating to appointment of a member to serve as chairman;
- (2) Develop and submit a plan to the Administration as required in this section;
- (3) Submit a summary report to the Governor or the Governor's designee on or before December 1, 2004, on its membership, organization, rules, progress in developing a plan, and compliance with this section; and
- (4)
 - (i) On July 1, 2005, and every 2 years thereafter, submit a local plan as described in subsection (f) of this section to the Governor, or the Governor's designee; and
 - (ii) Report every 6 months to the Administration on its progress in implementing the plan.

(f) Local plans. -- A local plan shall:

- (1) Include the plans, strategies, and priorities of the county for meeting the identified needs of the general public and the criminal justice system for alcohol and drug abuse evaluation, prevention, and treatment services;
- (2) Include a survey of all federal, State, local, and private funds used in the county for alcohol and drug abuse evaluation, prevention, and treatment; and
- (3) Be in a format as prescribed by the Administration.

(g) Application for funds. -- A county or unit of a county applying for funds from a State unit for any alcohol or drug abuse evaluation, prevention, or treatment services within that county shall submit that application to the local drug and alcohol abuse council for its consideration.

(h) Application for funds -- Review of application. --

- (1) The local drug and alcohol abuse council may recommend to any federal or State unit or private foundation that an application for any funds for drug or alcohol abuse evaluation, prevention, or treatment services in the county be approved.
- (2)
 - (i) A local drug and alcohol abuse council shall consider whether the grant application is consistent with the local plan and the strategies and priorities set out in the local plan.
 - (ii) A recommendation by a local drug and alcohol abuse council may include any additional information the council considers useful to the governmental unit or private foundation in its consideration of the application.

(i) Duties of Administration. --

- (1) The Administration may provide each local drug and alcohol abuse council with any necessary technical assistance.

(2) The Administration shall provide any funds available from the Maryland Substance Abuse Fund or other sources for operation of a local council on submission of a request for funds and approval of a budget in accordance with Administration regulations.

(j) **State funding required.** -- The planning, reporting, and reviewing requirements for a local drug and alcohol abuse council under this section do not apply unless appropriate State funding for fulfilling the requirements has been provided.