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Media Statement on Governor Hogan Signing the HOPE Act

Comprehensive legislation to combat heroin crisis includes "Keep the Door Open" provisions to increase behavioral health provider rates

Annapolis, Md. (May 25, 2016) - Governor Larry Hogan signed a comprehensive package of measures to address the state's opioid crisis today. The legislation, known as the Heroin and Opioid Prevention Effort (HOPE) Act, establishes a 24/7 crisis treatment center for individuals experiencing mental health and substance use crises, requires hospitals to set a new protocol for discharging patients treated for substance use disorders, increases access to overdose-reversal drug Naloxone and sets greater funding for community behavioral health providers. The bills ([SB967/HB1329](#)) passed unanimously in the state Senate and 139-1 in the House of Delegates.

The [Behavioral Health Coalition of Maryland](#) celebrated today's bill signing, highlighting the "Keep the Door Open" provisions in the legislation that will increase access to community-level care for mental health and substance use disorders. Those provisions increase funding for community behavioral health providers over the next three years and require a rate study to determine a cost-based payment structure that will provide adequate reimbursement to sustain community-based behavioral health services.

Dan Martin, director of public policy for the Mental Health Association of Maryland, spoke on behalf of the Coalition:

"The HOPE Act will make a difference in many people's lives. This bill reverses a decade of eroding funds for community behavioral health services and will help our community provider workforce keep their doors open and offer desperately needed treatment to vulnerable Marylanders. Maryland is showing that it is willing to tackle the opioid crisis head on and invest in proven behavioral health treatment.

The Behavioral Health Coalition wishes to thank Governor Hogan for signing the HOPE Act. We also thank the bills' sponsors, Senator Katherine Klausmeier and Delegate Eric Bromwell, for the hard work they and committee members put into this bipartisan legislation. Finally, we

want to acknowledge Senator Guy Guzzone and Delegate Antonio Hayes, for championing the 'Keep the Door Open' provisions for behavioral health providers in the bill."

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THE MARYLAND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COALITION is a diverse mix of non-governmental organizations working together to ensure individuals affected by mental health and substance use disorders have high quality and accessible services for their needs. www.KeepTheDoorOpenMD.org.