



House Bill 1012

Public Health - Local Suicide Fatality Review Teams - Authorization

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Health Committee

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From: Karrington Anderson

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1012. This bill authorizes local governments to establish multidisciplinary and multiagency suicide fatality review teams to examine suicide deaths at the local level and develop recommendations aimed at prevention.

Suicide remains a significant public health concern in Maryland communities. Counties are often on the front lines of behavioral health services, crisis response, and emergency medical services. HB 1012 empowers local jurisdictions to bring these partners together in a structured and collaborative manner to better understand the circumstances surrounding suicide deaths and identify opportunities for prevention.

Under this bill, a county or municipality may establish a local suicide fatality review team, and two or more counties may form a single multicounty team. This flexibility is especially important for smaller or rural jurisdictions that may benefit from shared expertise and resources. The purpose of a local team is to prevent suicide deaths by reviewing cases occurring within the county, identifying systemic, service, and policy factors associated with suicide risk, promoting coordination among relevant entities, and developing actionable recommendations.

The bill outlines a comprehensive team composition that draws on local health officers, social services, behavioral health providers, law enforcement, emergency medical services, hospitals, school leadership, and community representatives. By convening these stakeholders, local teams can examine trends in suicide, identify gaps in systems of care or coordination, and submit recommendations to the State Suicide Fatality Review Committee or other appropriate local entities.

By strengthening coordination and supporting evidence-based recommendations, HB 1012 provides counties with a meaningful tool to reduce suicide deaths and improve behavioral health outcomes in their communities. For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report.