



# THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**BILL:** House Bill 87 – Public Health – Immunizations – Minor Consent (Access to Vaccines Act)

**SPONSOR:** Delegate Korman

**HEARING DATE:** February 12, 2020

**COMMITTEE:** Health and Government Operations

**CONTACT:** Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

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**POSITION:** SUPPORT

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The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 87 – Public Health – Immunizations – Minor Consent (Access to Vaccines Act)**, which authorizes a health care provider to provide an immunization to a minor without the consent of the parent/guardian if the minor is at least 16 years of age, consents to the immunization, and the health care provider determines the minor is mature and capable of giving informed consent with regard to the immunization.

Vaccines are a powerful tool for disease prevention and save an estimated 2 to 3 million lives per year.<sup>1</sup> Per the World Health Organization, “In the USA, there has been a 99% decrease in incidence for the nine diseases for which vaccines have been recommended for decades, accompanied by a similar decline in mortality and disease sequelae.”<sup>2</sup> Vaccines not only prevent infectious diseases, but also certain types of cancer<sup>3</sup>.

Despite the well-documented safety and effectiveness of immunizations, vaccine hesitancy and refusal persist. Parental refusal to vaccinate their children recently resulted in the reemergence of a potentially fatal vaccine-preventable disease. In April 2019, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported the greatest number of measles cases in the United States since measles was eliminated

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<sup>1</sup> <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-health/immunization/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/2/07-040089/en/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/prevention/vaccination.htm>

in 2000.<sup>4</sup> In 2017, a total of 110,000 people globally died from measles; most were children.<sup>5</sup>

The area of vaccine consent by minors is relatively new. Many states have recently adopted regulations similar to HB 87, including California, Delaware, Minnesota, New York, Alaska, Idaho, Alabama, Oregon, and South Carolina.<sup>6</sup>

Without the recommended vaccinations, young people risk severe illness with lasting impacts and potential death. Passage of HB 87 enables young adults to make their own decisions on vaccines and take the necessary steps to prevent life-threatening illnesses.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 87** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2019/s0424-highest-measles-cases-since-elimination.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/over-20-million-children-worldwide-missed-out-measles-vaccine-annually-past-8-years>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2019/06/24/teens-of-anti-vaxxers-can-get-their-own-vaccines-some-states-say>