



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY OF DELEGATE PAM QUEEN
HB 666 – Workgroup on Screening Related to Adverse Childhood Experiences
HB628 – Health Occupation-Primary Care Providers – Adverse Childhood
Experiences Screening
SUPPORT

Greetings Chair Shane Pendergrass, Vice-Chair Joseline Pena-Melnyk, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that occur in childhood between 0-17 years of age. Examples of ACEs are experiencing violence or abuse; witnessing violence in the home or community; having a family member attempt or die by suicide; living in households with substance misuse, mental health problems, or instability due to parental separation (divorce, jail, or prison).

ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse in adulthood. Preventing ACEs could potentially reduce a large number of health conditions, including a wide range of chronic diseases, cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. For example, up to 1.9 million cases of heart disease and 21 million cases of depression could have been potentially avoided by preventing ACEs. The economic and social costs to families, communities, and society totals hundreds of billions of dollars each year. Yet, negative impacts due to ACEs can be prevented.

HB 666 defines the composition of a workgroup that updates, improves, or develops ACEs screening tools, studies actions to address ACEs, and makes recommendations.

HB 628 uses the outcomes of HB 666 to direct Maryland Department of Health to establish a course that integrates ACEs into mental and physical health care of children; and establishes an Adverse Childhood Experiences Screening Grant Program which provides grants to health care providers of minors who implement trauma-informed health care.

Due to a personal health crisis, I learned about the importance of understanding trauma informed care; and how ACEs can attributed to health risks. I seek a favorable recommendation for these important bills.