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Baltimore and Howard Counties

Health and Government Operations
Committee

Subcommittees

Estates and Trusts

Insurance



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB 1375 – Support
Public School Students - Vision Services and the Vision for Maryland Program**

Chairwoman Kaiser, Vice Chair Washington and Ways and Means Committee Members,

HB 1375 establishes the *Vision for Maryland Program*, which would provide health specialists in the State Department of Health and the Department of Education to collaboratively design, implement and oversee the program and guarantee that, whether through use of the Vision for Maryland Program or through mechanism of their own design and making, the students in every jurisdiction in the State have the vision and hearing supports they need to learn.

Currently, schools in Maryland provide vision screening to all children. Those who fail the screening are given information for follow up testing. However, seventy percent of students do not receive follow up corrective treatment or vision care, which the exam may find necessary. The *Vision for Maryland Program* would provide at-risk or struggling students who fail the eye screening test, full eye examinations, and vision care. Jurisdiction are not required to participate but it is a resource they can invite in to help them achieve the goal.

When we know better, we do better. Now that we know how many kids we've been missing and how we have failed them, we need to fix this. This ought to be an easy lift because we have identified the problem and we know that failure to address this lack of follow up vision care has long term repercussions, not only for the kids, but also for our communities. We can, and are obligated to, do better.

I urge a favorable report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terri L. Hill'.

Terri L. Hill, M.D.