



Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Mid-Atlantic States, Inc
2101 East Jefferson Street
Rockville, Maryland 20852

February 9, 2022

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building Room 240
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 6 – Support

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Committee:

Kaiser Permanente is pleased to support HB 6, “Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Dental Coverage for Adults.” Kaiser Permanente is the largest private integrated health care delivery system in the United States, delivering health care to over 12 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia.¹ Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States, which operates in Maryland, provides and coordinates complete health care services for approximately 800,000 members. In Maryland, we deliver care to over 460,000 members.

Kaiser Permanente supports policies that ensure all Marylanders have access to affordable, high-quality health care. Further, Kaiser Permanente supports “whole-person care,” including the provision of access to services and resources that address beneficiaries’ physical health, mental health and social needs. To that end, we endorse the provision of coverage through Medicaid for a full range of needs, including dental services.

An [estimated](#) 74 million Americans have no dental coverage, and a recent [survey](#) found that an estimated 6 million Americans lost their dental coverage during the pandemic. The CDC has reported that there are substantial [disparities](#) in oral health, with Black, Hispanic and lower-income Americans experiencing higher rates of tooth decay, gum disease and oral cancer, as [more than half of Americans](#) avoid or delay healthcare, including dental care, because of high costs.

Given that Medicaid beneficiaries comprise some of the most vulnerable, complex patients, the Medicaid program should play a role in addressing these needs. Kaiser Permanente is committed to working with state leaders to develop sustainable funding models for these services under a financially integrated model of care like HealthChoice.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact me at Allison.W.Taylor@kp.org or (202) 924-7496 with questions.

¹ Kaiser Permanente comprises Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., the nation’s largest not-for-profit health plan, and its health plan subsidiaries outside California and Hawaii; the not-for-profit Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, which operates 39 hospitals and over 650 other clinical facilities; and the Permanente Medical Groups, self-governed physician group practices that exclusively contract with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and its health plan subsidiaries to meet the health needs of Kaiser Permanente’s members.

Kaiser Permanente
Comments on HB 6
February 9, 2022

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Allison Taylor".

Allison Taylor
Director of Government Relations
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Mid-Atlantic States, Inc.