

Written Testimony to the Senate Finance Committee
Submitted by Nathan Ferrell
SB 201 - Maryland Medical Assistance and Children's Health Insurance Programs -
School-Based Behavioral Health Services - Reimbursement
February 7, 2023

Position: FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith and members of the Committee. My name is Nathan Ferrell, and I am a Spanish Teacher, and a member of BTU Local 340, the union for educational employees working for the Baltimore City Public School System. I ask for a favorable report for HB 201.

Maryland lawmakers should adopt SB201 legislation to reflect the latest CMS guidance so school districts can draw down additional Medicaid funding for school health services to expand access to school-based health services.

Baltimore city public school students are facing an unprecedented need for clinical services in schools. The trauma and violence our students face greatly impacts their wellbeing and ability to grow and learn. Current MD law explicitly prohibits reimbursement for school health-related services that are not included on a child's IEP/IFSP. Our students are desperate for clinical services ranging from therapies offered by our related service providers to comprehensive mental health services that COULD be paid for using existing medicaid funds.

Altering Maryland law so that Medicaid could be billed for services provided to non-IEP students would open up potential funding streams that could greatly expand the number of clinicians working in LEAs across the state thus expanding services that are desperately needed by our students.

Members of the committee, too many students who need help are being left behind. Maryland is leaving federal dollars on the table. Again I ask for a favorable report on SB 201. Thank you.

Sincerely,

T. Nathan Ferrell
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