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Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill: House Bill 767 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Adult and Pediatric Dental Services - Reimbursement Rates

Hearing Date: February 14, 2024

Position: Support with Amendments

The Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC) supports *House Bill 767 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Adult and Pediatric Dental Services – Reimbursement Rates* with amendments. The bill requires the Maryland Department of Health to evaluate the cost of aligning Medicaid rates with commercial insurers. The bill also requires the Department to implement rate increases.

MDAC is appreciative of the ongoing support of the Department of Health for dental rate increases in the Medicaid program. In fiscal 2023 and 2024, the Department implemented rate increases across many dental codes with \$20 million in \$19 million in those respective years. We support the bill's focus on continuing progress in enhancing dental rates as a key strategy in increasing the number of dentists participating in Medicaid. We think it is worthwhile to study how Medicaid rates can be more aligned commercial rates.

We have some caution about the bill's requirement for annual rate increases to ensure Medicaid rates are at least 60% of commercial rates. We support the goal of this provision, but as a practical matter, we note that this provision would limit the Department of Health's ability to expand coverage to new services, such as dentures.

MDAC requests a favorable report with amendments that allow Department flexibility in directing additional resources to coverage of new services. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

Optimal Oral Health for All Marylanders