



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Ryan Moran, DrPH, MHSA, Acting Secretary

Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners
Spring Grove Hospital Center
Benjamin Rush Bldg.
55 Wade Ave/Tulip Drive
Catonsville, MD 21228

March 27, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Re: House Bill 771 – Student Health – Program for Student Dental Health – Establishment – Letter of Support as Amended

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

The Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners respectfully submits this letter of support as amended for House Bill 771 – Student Health – Program for Student Dental Health – Establishment. Although the bill was amended in the House to delete the requirement that beginning in the 2027-2028 school year each student enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school in the State submit to the school a certificate of dental health, the Board believes that the bill will still have significant benefit for Maryland children.

The Department of Health is required to establish a program for student dental health which must include the following: standards for recommended periodic dental examinations of students; information for students and parents on how to find insurance that will cover dental care; lists of pediatric dentists located in different regions of the State; and the importance of dental health to a student's overall health and well-being.

In addition, the bill as amended requires the Department of Health to support and facilitate each county board of education in publishing information on student dental health that is created by the Program for Student Dental Health and in student handbooks. The bill mandates that the Department of Health adopt regulations to carry out the bill.

Maintaining good oral health for children is critical. Cavities are the most common chronic diseases among children, and untreated dental problems can lead to pain, infection, worsening of the

dentition, difficulty eating and sleeping, other health conditions, social and emotional issues, and challenges in school. Early detection is important. Preventive dental visits, such as check-ups and dental cleanings, are essential to maintain oral health and address dental problems before they become more serious. It is hoped that the bill will help to create a dental home for continuing dental treatment for children, especially the most vulnerable.

For the foregoing reasons, the Dental Board requests that HB 771 as amended receive a favorable report.

I hope that this information is helpful. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact me at 202-997-2606 or chiyo.alie@maryland.gov.

The opinion of the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners expressed in this letter of support as amended position paper does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the administration.

Sincerely,
Chiyo Alie, D.D.S.
Chiyo Alie, D.D.S.
Board President