

# HOUSE BILL 849

J1, J2

5lr2353  
CF SB 492

---

By: **Delegates Lopez and Kaufman**

Introduced and read first time: January 30, 2025

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

---

## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Commission to Study the Dental Hygienist Shortage – Establishment**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Maryland Commission to Study the Dental Hygienist  
4 Shortage; and generally relating to the Maryland Commission to Study the Dental  
5 Hygienist Shortage.

6 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

7 That:

8 (a) There is a Maryland Commission to Study the Dental Hygienist Shortage.

9 (b) The purpose of the Commission is to support the State's efforts to improve the  
10 oral health of Marylanders by ensuring the stability and sustainability of the State's dental  
11 hygiene workforce.

12 (c) The Commission consists of the following members:

13 (1) the Secretary of Health, or the Secretary's designee;

14 (2) the Secretary of Higher Education, or the Secretary's designee;

15 (3) one representative of the University of Maryland School of Dental  
16 Hygiene, designated by the Dean of the School;

17 (4) one representative of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future  
18 Accountability and Implementation Board, designated by the Chair of the Board;

19 (5) one representative of the Maryland Commission for Women, designated  
20 by the Chair of the Commission;

---

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (6) two representatives of the Maryland Association of Community  
2 Colleges, including a representative of a rural community college with a dental hygiene  
3 program, designated by the Executive Director of the Association;

4 (7) one representative of the Maryland Dental Hygienists' Association,  
5 designated by the President of the Association;

6 (8) one representative of the Maryland Dental Action Coalition, designated  
7 by the Chief Executive Officer of the Coalition;

8 (9) one representative of the Maryland Rural Health Association,  
9 designated by the President of the Association;

10 (10) one representative of the Maryland State Dental Association,  
11 designated by the President of the Association;

12 (11) one representative of the Jon C. Burr Foundation, designated by the  
13 President of the Foundation;

14 (12) one representative of the Job Opportunities Task Force, designated by  
15 the President of the Task Force; and

16 (13) the following members, appointed by the Secretary of Health:

17 (i) a representative from a school of public health who has expertise  
18 in workforce development;

19 (ii) a representative with expertise in education and training for  
20 dental assistants;

21 (iii) a representative with expertise in education and training for  
22 community health workers;

23 (iv) a representative with expertise in stackable credentials in  
24 nursing education;

25 (v) a representative of a federally qualified health center; and

26 (vi) a representative from an area health education center.

27 (d) The Commission may consult with individuals and organizations with  
28 expertise in oral health who are represented on the Commission.

29 (e) The Secretary of Health shall designate the chair of the Commission.

30 (f) The Maryland Department of Health shall provide staff for the Commission.

1 (g) A member of the Commission:

2 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Commission; but

3 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State  
4 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

5 (h) The Commission shall:

6 (1) assess the dental hygienist shortage in the State and the impact of the  
7 shortage on oral health in rural, suburban, and urban communities; and

8 (2) study and make recommendations regarding methods to:

9 (i) improve the recruitment and retention of dental hygienists in  
10 private practice, community health centers, and public health settings at the statewide  
11 level;

12 (ii) develop region-specific recruitment and retention strategies for  
13 dental hygienists in rural, suburban, and urban areas of the State;

14 (iii) expand dental hygiene education opportunities at institutions of  
15 higher education;

16 (iv) increase retention of dental hygiene students through  
17 educational support and wraparound services; and

18 (v) support dental assistants and community health workers in  
19 accessing dental hygiene educational opportunities.

20 (i) (1) On or before December 1, 2025, the Commission shall submit an interim  
21 report of its findings and recommendations to the Maryland Department of Health, the  
22 Maryland Higher Education Commission, and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State  
23 Government Article, the General Assembly.

24 (2) On or before December 1, 2026, the Commission shall submit a final  
25 report on its findings and recommendations to the Maryland Department of Health, the  
26 Maryland Higher Education Commission, and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State  
27 Government Article, the General Assembly.

28 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
29 1, 2025. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and, at the end of June 30, 2027,  
30 this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and  
31 of no further force and effect.