



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: House Bill 409 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Participation of School-Based Health Centers - Regulations

SPONSOR: Delegate Cullison

HEARING DATE: February 5, 2020

COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 409 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Participation of School-Based Health Centers - Regulations** which expands the list of possible sponsoring entities for school-based health centers who can participate with the Maryland Medical Assistance Program.

School-based health centers (SBHCs) offer comprehensive primary and preventive care services in a school or on a school campus.¹ SBHCs expand beyond traditional school nursing services to include somatic, mental health and dental services by licensed medical, behavioral health and dental providers regardless of a student or their family's ability to pay. This ensures students are physically and mentally healthy, which positively impacts academic achievement.²

SBHCs offer convenient and timely care to uninsured or underinsured students and can help prevent students from missing school when they are sick.³ According to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), SBHCs have "proven effective in diagnosing and treating illness, managing chronic health conditions, and increasing school attendance for children at risk of missing school due to health issues."⁴

¹ <http://marylandpublicschools.org/about/pages/dsfss/sssp/sbhc/index.aspx>

² <http://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/DSFSS/SSSP/SBHC/MarylandSBHCStandards.pdf>

³ <http://marylandpublicschools.org/about/pages/dsfss/sssp/sbhc/index.aspx>

⁴ <http://marylandpublicschools.org/about/pages/dsfss/sssp/sbhc/index.aspx>

Despite the documented success of SBHCs, these services exist in only a small number of schools in Maryland. In Prince George's County, only four schools have SBHCs. The restrictive list of possible sponsoring entities is a major barrier to broad implementation of SBHCs.

HB 409 removes this barrier by expanding the list to include any entity approved by the Maryland Department of Health. In Prince George's County, it would expand the possible entities we can contract with to open more SBHCs – and ultimately to serve more students.

HB 409 is a simple regulatory change that could have a significant positive impact on student health in Maryland by expanding access to SBHCs.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 409** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.