



**Committee:** House Health and Government Operations Committee  
**Bill Number:** HB 87  
**Title:** Public Health - Immunizations – Minor Consent (Access to Vaccines Act)  
**Hearing Date:** February 12, 2020  
**Position:** Support

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The Maryland Nurses Association (MNA) supports *House Bill 87 – Public Health – Immunizations – Minor Consent (Access to Vaccines Act)*. This bill would authorize health care providers to immunize a minor who is at least 16 without the consent of a parent or guardian if the minor consents and the provider determines that the minor is mature and capable of giving that consent.

MNA strongly supports increasing access to vaccinations, which have proved a safe and valuable tool in protecting public health. Before vaccines were developed, diseases like whooping cough, polio, measles, Haemophilus influenza, and rubella caused thousands of deaths every year. Thankfully, these diseases are nearly gone from our country due to vaccines.

However, in 2013, outbreaks of measles occurred around the country – a reminder that there is still a need to increase access to vaccinations.<sup>i</sup> Allowing 16 and 17 year old minors to consent to vaccines will give them access to the protection they need, and allow them to be part of protecting public health.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net) or (443) 926-3443.

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<sup>i</sup> References: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/whatifstop.htm>