



# Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

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PO Box 131 ♦ Stevenson, Maryland 21153 ♦ [mota.memberlodge.org](http://mota.memberlodge.org)

**Committee:** Ways and Means Committee  
**Bill Number:** HB 515  
**Title:** Public Schools – Staff Members – Report  
**Hearing Date:** February 14, 2020  
**Position:** Support with Amendment

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The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) supports *House Bill 515 – Public Schools – Staff Members – Report*, with an amendment. This bill would require county school boards to report each year on the ratio of students to certain school staff.

In educational settings, occupational therapy practitioners provide habilitative services to students with disabilities, typically under an Individualized Education Program (IEP). There has been anecdotal discussion over the past decade of the shortage of occupational therapy practitioners in education settings, necessitating the collection of data by local school systems.

This is especially true for Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTAs) who are not employed in all local school systems even though they can assist in addressing workforce shortages school systems experience in employing occupational therapists. With this, we respectfully request that the bill be amended to include both occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants.

MOTA strongly supports collecting student ratio data. We believe this is valuable first step in addressing workforce shortages, particularly among health care practitioners, in schools.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Rachael Faulkner at [rfaulkner@policypartners.net](mailto:rfaulkner@policypartners.net) or (410) 693-4000.