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Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill Number: House Bill 123 – Preserve Telehealth Access Act of 2021

Hearing Date: January 27, 2021

Position: Support

The Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC) strongly supports *House Bill 123 – Preserve Telehealth Access Act of 2021*. The bill recognizes that telehealth can improve access to all types of services, including dental services. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Maryland Medical Assistance Program has reimbursed for tele-dentistry using a procedure code established by the American Dental Association. Medicaid covers dental services for all enrolled children, dually eligible adults under the age of 65, and pregnant women. This summer, Medicaid is expected to add postpartum dental coverage.

Through telehealth during the pandemic, dentists have been able to provide remote consultations and then follow-up with in-person services as necessary. The pandemic will accelerate the implementation of telehealth to address access issues by:

- Connecting patients in remote areas to specialists. This is particular critical in rural areas;
- Providing emergency consults and diverting patients from emergency rooms; and
- Allowing dentist to provide consults to patients who face mobility and transportation issues.

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 or (443) 926-3443.

Optimal Oral Health for All Marylanders