



Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

PO Box 36401, Towson, Maryland 21286 ♦ motamembers.org

Committee: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 856 - Public Schools - Health Services - School Nurses

Hearing Date: March 8, 2022

Position: Support

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association supports *Senate Bill 856 – Public Health Services – School Nurses*. The bill requires every public school to have a full-time nurse. Occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants work closely with school nurses to coordinate services for students with special needs, including those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). School nurses are essential to students with IEPs being successful in school, yet they are often stretched to capacity because they are assigned to cover multiple schools. This situation has become much worse after two years of the COVID-19 pandemic. Students are returning to school with significantly more complex somatic and behavioral health issues related to the impact of the pandemic.

We ask for a favorable report on this bill. Maryland’s baseline in health care staffing should be a nurse in every school. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Scott Tiffin at stiffin@policypartners.net.