



Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Bill Number: Senate Bill 168
Title: Department of Health - ImmuNet and Statewide Advisory Commission on Immunizations
Hearing Date: January 20, 2022
Position: Support with Amendment

The Maryland Nurses Association (MNA) supports *Senate Bill 168 – Department of Health - ImmuNet and Statewide Advisory Commission on Immunizations*. This bill makes updates to the membership of the Statewide Advisory Commission on Immunizations and also ensures that vaccines provided at nursing facilities, assisted living programs, continuing care retirement communities, and medical day care programs are reported to ImmuNet. As we have seen during the COVID pandemic, ImmuNet is an essential public health tool for a robust vaccination program. That is why it is important that all vaccinations are reported to ImmuNet regardless of where they are provided.

The Statewide Advisory Commission on Immunizations serves an important function in monitoring and making recommendations about the State’s vaccination programs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there were a variety of issues related to child vaccination, including difficulty ensuring access to COVID-19 vaccine itself and keeping children up to date on their required school vaccines. That is why MNA believes it is important that there be expertise on the Commission from members of the school health community. **That is why MNA request an amendment to add a school nurse to the commission:**

On page 3, after line 17, insert “A SCHOOL HEALTH NURSE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL HEALTH NURSES OR THE MARYLAND NURSES ASSOCIATION”

Although we support the addition of the State Superintendent to the commission, we believe that the addition of a school nurse would ensure the Commission is able to hear firsthand about the unique difficulties facing school health programs.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Scott Tiffin at stiffin@policypartners.net or (443) 350-1325.