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March 7, 2022

Chair Shane E. Pendergrass  
Health and Government Operations Committee  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Honorable Chair Pendergrass:

The Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC) strongly supports House Bill 1082 – Consumer Health Information Hub and Requirements. The bill will designate the University of Maryland Herschel S. Horowitz Center for Health Literacy (Center) as the State's Consumer Health Information Hub.

The Maryland Oral Health Plan, 2018-2023, specifically cites oral health literacy and education as an effective approach to improving the oral and overall health of all Marylanders and the Center's participation in statewide oral health awareness and education efforts have proved valuable and effective. As the Consumer Health Information Hub, the Center will further advance oral health literacy and health education efforts by:

Providing Maryland residents with accurate and easy to read information to improve their understanding of the importance of oral health, the relationship of oral health to overall health, and guidance on healthy behaviors and practices to prevent oral disease.

Increasing awareness and use of oral health resources that help health, human service, and non-traditional support professionals work with people to improve preventive oral health behaviors and better understand and navigate oral health care system.

Educating medical professionals about the importance of oral/systemic health connection and foster collaboration between medical and dental communities.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Mary Backley, CEO, at [mbackley@mdac.us](mailto:mbackley@mdac.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary C. Backley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary C. Backley  
Chief Executive Officer

***Optimal Oral Health for All Marylanders***