

Mid Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. Coalition

5900 Abriana Way, Elkridge, Maryland 21075

From: Mid Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. Coalition

To: Chairman William Smith Jr.

Re: Family Law – Custody Evaluators – Qualifications and Training

Date: January 22, 2022

Dear Chairman Smith,

The Mid-Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. is in Favor of SB 336

We represent the Mid Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. Coalition (Prevent Abuse and Neglect through Dental Awareness). We were established in 2000, our mission is “To create an atmosphere of understanding in dentistry and other professional communities which will result in the prevention of abuse and neglect through early identification and appropriate intervention for those who have been abused or neglected.” Dentists and Dental Hygienists (Dental Professionals) are mandated by the State of Maryland to report suspected cases of abuse and neglect. Our coalition has established a Continuing Education (CE) course that educates Dental Professionals and others how to recognize, report, or refer. The Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners has deemed this course as a mandatory CE requirement for Dentists and Hygienists to renew their licenses. We also address domestic violence, elder abuse, human trafficking and bullying in our CE course.

Through experience our Coalition knows that sound decisions cannot be made without proper education, that is the main purpose of our continuing education course. It is imperative that that a custody evaluator be required to meet educational and experiential requirements in order to serve as an evaluator for the courts. Evaluations must be based on sound information. Due to changes that occur over time it is important to update this information and receive 5 hours of ongoing education and training every 2 years. We have seen in the Dental community that a plan like this works resulting in positive outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 336 and ask for a favorable vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Mid-Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. Coalition

Carol Caiazza, RDH President

Susan Camardese, RDH, MS, Vice President