

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 Luke Clippinger

Re: Child Abuse and Neglect-Definition of Neglect

Date: February 8, 2022

Dear Chairman Clippinger,

The Mid-Atlantic P.A.N.D.A. is in Favor of HB 338

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.

When a victim is traumatized, it is difficult for them to protect themselves due to fear, the feeling of isolation and that no one would believe them. Sometimes they just do not know how to get help. For these reasons they are not capable of removing themselves or the children involved from witnessing acts of abuse or leaving the perpetrator. They can't report this abuse because they don't know how to. Their victimization should not be compounded because they were unable to respond to their abuse.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 338 and its important definition.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Carol Caiazzo, RDH President

Susan Camardese, RDH, MS, Vice President