



*Advocating for Maryland NPs since 1992*

**RE: HB 118 Public Schools – Student Attendance – Excused Absences for Mental Health Needs**

**POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland, Inc., (NPAM), the only professional association advocating solely for the over 800 active members of NPAM and the over 8,000 certified Nurse Practitioners (NPs) licensed in Maryland, we are requesting your support for **HB 118 Public Schools – Student Attendance – Excused Absences for Mental Health Needs with amendments.**

This bill provides that absences from school for mental health needs are lawful absences under certain circumstances and clarifies the circumstances under which an absence for a student’s mental health needs shall be excused.

We respectfully request that Nurse Practitioners (NPs) be added to “Physicians” in (C)(3), which states that a note is not required for absence. Many NPs in Maryland serve as Primary Care Providers to school age children and adding NP’s would mitigate any potential confusion. We suggest the language read as follows-

**“A COUNTY BOARD MAY NOT REQUIRE A NOTE FROM A PHYSICIAN **OR NURSE PRACTITIONER** TO EXCUSE AN ABSENCE UNDER THIS SUBSECTION.”**

Thank you for your support of **HB 118 Public Schools – Excused Absences for Mental Health Needs.** Please contact NPAM Executive Director Beverly Lang should you have questions.

Kindest Regards,

**Beverly Lang MScN, RN, ANP-BC, FAANP**

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