



Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

PO Box 36401, Towson, Maryland 21286 ♦ mota-members.com

Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 482 - Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program - Mental Health Professionals in Public Schools

Hearing Date: February 22, 2023

Position: Favorable with Amendment

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association supports *Senate Bill 482 – Education, Energy, and the Environment*. The bill establishes permanent eligibility for mental health professionals in schools to participate in the Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program.

As members of the behavioral health team at schools, we strongly support this measure as part of the strategy to address the shortage of behavioral health professionals in schools. This is evidenced by recent reports that 1 in 3 adolescent girls have considered suicide.¹

We would like to request an amendment to clarify that occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants are included in the program:

On page 2 in line 10 insert “occupational therapist and occupational therapy assistant” after “SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISOR”

We ask for a favorable report with this amendment. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2023/p0213-yrbs.html>