



MID-ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

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TO: The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Clarence K. Lam

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
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DATE: February 28, 2023

RE: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT** – Senate Bill 628 – *School-Based Health Centers – Services, Infrastructure, and Funding*

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP), and the Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers (MACHC), we **support with amendment** Senate Bill 628.

Senate Bill 628 provides a number of enhancements to the advancement of school-based health centers including: requiring Medicaid to provide coverage for sports physicals performed at school-based health centers; requiring the Department of Health (MDH) to include infrastructure needs in the guidelines for the expansion of school-based health centers, including needs associated with school-based health centers becoming Vaccine for Children (VFC) providers; and requires MDH to develop a funding allocation formula and associated budget proposals.

School-based health centers are community health centers within the four walls of school. Services may include primary, behavioral, and oral health care services. There are almost 90 school-based health centers across Maryland. Located in areas of high concentration of poverty, school-based health centers primarily serve children who are uninsured or participate in the Maryland Medical Assistance Program.

MedChi, MDAAP, and MACHC support the provisions of this bill that address infrastructure needs for school-based health centers to become VFC providers and provide sufficient funding to support school-based health centers in every County. It also supports the provisions that will enable school-based health centers to receive reimbursement for sports physicals, which will help ensure that all students, regardless of family income or insurance status can participate in sports.

The above-named organizations are concerned about the provisions that would require the development of a funding methodology. While this objective is well-intended, the bill would remove the discretion of MDH to allocate funding according to the emerging needs and requests of the school-based health center community and is not a formula that has been the subject of deliberation by the relevant agencies or stakeholders. For those reasons, MedChi, MDAAP, and MACHC would request the provisions related to developing a funding formula be deleted from the legislation.

With this noted amendment, we urge a favorable report.