



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

March 7, 2023

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
241 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: HB 970 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Hospitals – Dental Services – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of support for House Bill (HB) 970 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Hospitals – Dental Services. HB 970 will require the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to require acute care hospitals to develop a plan that demonstrates their commitment to provide operating room time for dental services. Acute care hospitals will be required to submit this report annually beginning on January 1, 2024.

MDH is concerned that hospitals have been refusing to schedule operating room time for Medicaid enrolled children for dental services. HB 970 will ensure this gap is closed and that access to these critical services is available to Maryland's most vulnerable children. MDH further notes that it is committed to making updates to its dental procedure rates for ambulatory surgery centers to align with historic increases effected through the Health Services Cost Review Commission update factor made between Fiscal Year (FY)15 and FY23. MDH anticipates sending out a provider transmittal to announce the new rate shortly. These increases will be implemented annually going forward.

If you need more information, please do not hesitate to contact Megan Peters, Acting Director of Governmental Affairs at megan.peters@maryland.gov or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary