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March 3, 2023

To whom it may concern,

My name is Dr. D'Audra Cole. I am a Board Certified Pediatric Dentist and the owner of Frederick KiDDS Pediatric Dentistry in Frederick, MD since November of 2015. I am an alumnus of Howard University College of Dentistry and received my Masters of Science in Dentistry and Pediatric Dentistry certificate from Virginia Commonwealth University. Prior to opening my office in 2015 I worked as an Associate Pediatric Dentist for various offices in Montgomery, Frederick and Howard counties since 2007. During that time I have maintained privileges at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital caring for hundreds of patients over the last 16 years.

When I became a solo practitioner as opposed to a member of a group practice, my OR block time was greatly reduced. I only had OR access on the second Monday of the month starting at 1pm which only allowed me to only complete 2-3 cases. This resulted in a backlog of patients resulting in a 9 month wait. In addition to the wait, patients as young as three were forced to go without food for extended periods of time since I could only provide services in the afternoon. This has been a burden for many families.

In October of 2022 I, along with the other pediatric dentists privileged at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, had my block time taken away. While we can still schedule patients if space is available, it is a nearly impossible task as a solo practitioner. In my office I care for about 40 patients a day for dental cleanings, exams, dental work, and emergencies. I also employ 7 staff members who rely on a regular paycheck. It is impossible for me to move patients and cancel team member's scheduled hours at the last minute to see 1-3 patients. As such, I have had to send patients to see other colleagues across state lines in Virginia.

I respectfully submit that Maryland must improve access to operating room time in terms of a block schedule to help our vulnerable patients before we lose another child in the way we lost Demonte driver in 2007.

Respectfully,

D'Audra Cole, DDS

Board Certified Pediatric Dentist

Owner, Frederick KiDDS Pediatric Dentistry