



Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

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

Committee: House Ways and Means Committee

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

Hearing Date: March 29, 2023

Position: Favorable with Amendment

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association supports *Senate Bill 482 - Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program - Mental Health Professionals in Public Schools*. 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 21 insert "OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT" after "SOCIAL WORKER 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>