

Education Advocacy Coalition

for Students with Disabilities

SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL 492: Public Schools—Student Telehealth Appointments—Policy and Access

DATE: February 28, 2024

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities (EAC), a coalition of more than 40 organizations and individuals concerned with education policy for students with disabilities in Maryland, is pleased to support Senate Bill 492, which would require each county board of education to establish a policy to accommodate students who need to participate in telehealth appointments scheduled during the school day. In setting out several parameters for the policy, Senate Bill 492 specifies that each middle and high school shall designate a private space in the school with internet access and at least one seating option with a nearby electrical outlet and a flat surface to accommodate a laptop device.

EAC members represent or work with numerous students who must leave school regularly to attend health appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of the school day because of the unavailability of the health provider. Depending on when the appointment is scheduled and depending on the distance of the provider from the school, students may miss several hours or more of school on the days of their appointments. Senate Bill 492 would enable students to access the health services they need while remaining in school, thereby enabling them to keep up with their coursework and be full participants in their school community.

For these reasons, the EAC supports Senate Bill 492. Please contact Leslie Seid Margolis, Co-Chair for additional information at lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org or 443-692-2505.

Respectfully submitted,

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