

Maryland General Assembly  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Written Testimony of Bowie High Student Government Executive Board  
Lydia Murray, President

In SUPPORT of SB0492  
“Public Schools- Student Telehealth Appointments- Policy and Access”

February 28, 2024 1:00 pm

Thank you Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of SB0492, Public Schools- Student Telehealth Appointments - Policy and Access.

My name is Lydia Murray, and I am a Maryland resident and the President of Bowie High’s Student Government Executive Board (SGA). We are a student led organization fundamentally dedicated to government, civic involvement, school unity, spirit, improvement, and community advocacy. Bowie High is lucky to have a Mental Health coordinator, a partnership with Bowie Youth & Family Services (BYFS) who offers mental health informational and group sessions, and Hazel Health - an organization that offers free telehealth to students in person and at home. However, we are aware that Bowie is unique in this regard.

We have chosen to submit testimony in support of SB0492. We ardently support requiring state and local school boards to provide telehealth and technical advice in school to students who need support. We know that many PGCPs students benefit from access to Telehealth, and we believe that all schools should provide access to their students for their students’ overall wellbeing which is necessary for them to succeed in middle or high school.

As a student who currently uses therapy in order to navigate the waters of high school, I wish I knew about the mental health services my school provided. I know that using therapy has been instrumental to my ability to continue my education and enjoy my quality of life. And now that I do know about the telehealth services my school provides, I am glad to have been able to share this information with my friends, who are hopefully receiving the help that they need.

Because of my own personal mental health journey, and the journeys that I have witnessed, I am an ardent supporter of this bill because I know that it will only benefit the students involved.

Bowie High’s SGA also makes it a point to support Bowie’s students in all aspects of their health, and we believe that this bill will make sure *all* Maryland students are supported.

Thank you for your time and consideration.