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WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND
THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

January 28, 2025

To: Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair
Delegate Bonnie Cullison, Vice Chair
Health and Government Operations Committee

The Maryland Women's Caucus is proud to express our unanimous support for HB 265: **Districting - Dental Services - Qualification for Maryland Dent-Care Program and Study on Use of Dental Online Credentialing**. This vital piece of legislation expands eligibility for Higher Education Loan Assistance Grants provided by the Office of Student Financial Assistance, in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Health, to include part-time dentists and dental hygienists.

Women make up a significant majority of part-time dentists and dental hygienists in Maryland. By expanding eligibility for these grants, HB 265 provides essential financial relief and support to these professionals, empowering them to manage their student loan debt while advancing their careers. This legislation recognizes the unique challenges faced by women in dentistry, many of whom balance their professional responsibilities with caregiving and other commitments, which often necessitate part-time work.

HB 265 represents a thoughtful and impactful step toward addressing the financial burdens faced by women in dentistry and supporting their continued contributions to Maryland's healthcare landscape. It reflects a commitment to equity, opportunity, and recognition of the vital role women play in ensuring the health and well-being of our residents.

We respectfully urge the Health and Government Operations Committee to issue a **favorable report** for HB 265. Together, we can make meaningful progress in supporting Maryland's women professionals and the communities they serve.

Thank you for your consideration and for your dedication to improving the lives of Marylanders.

