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BILL: HB 771
TITLE: Student Health - Program for Student Dental Health - Established
DATE: February 25, 2025
POSITION: Oppose
COMMITTEE: House Ways and Means Committee
CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four local school superintendents **opposes** House Bill 771.

This bill requires that in the 2027-2028 school year, each student enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school in the state shall submit to the school a certificate of dental health in accordance with the program for student dental health under § 20–2302 of the health general article, on a schedule established by the department. The Maryland Department of Health is required to establish a program for student dental health and shall include (1) standards for the periodic dental examinations of students; (2) the creation of a certificate of dental health that can be used by public schools in accordance with § 7–402.1 of the education article; (3) the creation of a standard form to be used by health care practitioners, parents, and schools to certify a student's dental health; and (3) information for students and parents.

Maryland superintendents acknowledge the importance of dental health in the well-being of Maryland's students. PSSAM's opposition to this bill is not meant to diminish the value of widespread access to dental care, but rather to oppose the statutory mandate requiring students to submit a certificate of dental health to their school.

Local school systems are actively engaged in promoting and advancing the health of our students through a variety of programs. PSSAM certainly acknowledges the importance of the State's continued efforts to ensure that children are receiving quality dental health services, but have concerns regarding the operational mandates imposed in this bill that require schools to gather and maintain these medical certificates. We recognize that gaps exist in dental care for students

and are willing to work with our State partners in MSDE and the Department of Health to close those gaps without the requirements imposed by this legislation.

For these reasons, PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 771 and kindly requests an **unfavorable** report.