



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners
Spring Grove Hospital Center - Benjamin Rush Bldg.
55 Wade Ave/Tulip Drive
Catonsville, MD 21228

February 19, 2025

The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
131 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Re: House Bill 771 – Student Health – Program for Student Dental Health – Establishment – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

The Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners respectfully submits this letter of support for House Bill 771 – Student Health – Program for Student Dental Health – Establishment. The bill requires that beginning in the 2027-2028 school year each student enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school in the State submit to the school a certificate of dental health in accordance with the program for student dental health established under § 20-2302 of the Health-General Article, on a schedule established by the Department of Health.

The Department of Health is required to establish a program for student dental health which must include the following: standards for the periodic dental examinations of students; the creation of a standard form to be used by health care practitioners, parents, and schools to certify a student’s dental health; information for students and parents on how to find insurance that will cover dental care; lists of pediatric dentists located in areas; and the importance of dental health to a student’s overall health and well-being. The bill mandates that the Department of Health adopt regulations to carry out the bill.

Maintaining good oral health for children is critical. Cavities are the most common chronic diseases among children, and untreated dental problems can lead to pain, infection, worsening of the dentition, difficulty eating and sleeping, other health conditions, social and emotional

issues, and challenges in school. Early detection is important. Preventive dental visits, such as check-ups and dental cleanings, are essential to maintain oral health and address dental problems before they become more serious. It is hoped that by requiring a child to have a certificate of dental health the issues surrounding the child's dental health would be more easily identified by their school, and ultimately a dental home created for future treatment.

For the foregoing reasons, the Dental Board requests that HB 771 receive a favorable report.

I hope that this information is helpful. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact me at 202-997-2606 or chiyo.alie@maryland.gov.

The opinion of the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners expressed in this letter of support position paper does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the administration.

Sincerely,
Chiyo Alie, D.D.S.
Chiyo Alie, D.D.S.
Board President