



25. February. 2025

The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair  
The Honorable Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Vice Chair  
House Ways and Means Committee  
131 Taylor House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB771 (Harrison) Student Health - Program for Student Dental Health - Established -  
**FAVORABLE**

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Hakan Koymen and I am a pediatric dentist in Baltimore, Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, and Harford Counties. I am in support of HB711 because it continues to provide access for children to their "dental homes". Many counties in Maryland already require that students must have a dental form signed prior to coming to school. This does not prevent them from attending school, but it does help to reinforce with parents that their child needs to see a dentist for routine dental care. By passing HB711, we would be able to capture many children that do not see a dentist in a timely manner, and will help to ensure that those children that have a dental home have some place that school nurses can contact in case of an emergency or dental pain.

I will give you an example of what happened in one of our offices where a dental form is not on record at the school. The child is currently a patient of ours and a couple months ago had their "check-up" and no decay was noted. The child was at school last week and the school nurse noted that she thought she saw dental decay. Instead of contacting our office (the child's dentist) the nurse contacted the pediatrician. The pediatrician then tried to call our office to speak with the child's dentist. The two providers were not able to connect right away and it was not until several days later that they were able to speak about the child's oral health. This could have been alleviated if the the school had the child's oral health on file with a contact so they could directly reach out to the child's dentist to have the child seen.

Having these forms filled out would also help to capture those children that have active dental decay. Parents and school nurses would have a physical record stating that the child needs treatment with the hope that the school nurse and the dentist could help to make sure that the child gets the appropriate care.

Dental decay is the number one disease in children, it is five times more likely than asthma, however we do not require our kids to have a record if they have dental decay or not, but it is necessary to have documentation of their asthma condition. Too many children miss too many days of school due to dental disease and pain.

For the reasons above, I urge a favorable report on HB771.

Hakan O. Koymen, DDS, MS  
Diplomate, American Board of Pediatric Dentistry  
Trustee, American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry  
Dental Director, Maryland Healthy Smiles–SKYGEN

Perry Hall  
5002 Honeygo Center Drive  
Perry Hall, MD 21128  
410.248.3384

Arundel Mills  
7556 Teague Road  
Hanover, MD 21076  
410.799.0780

Abingdon  
3400 Box Hill Corporate Ctr Drive  
Abingdon, MD 21009  
410.569.4300

Dundalk  
4009 North Point Blvd  
Dundalk, MD 21222  
410.388.8273

Canton/Baltimore  
3904 Boston Street  
Baltimore, MD 21224  
410.537.1725