



February 7th, 2025

Maryland House of Representatives
Ways & Means Committee
130 Taylor
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the pediatric nurse practitioners (PNPs) and fellow pediatric-focused advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP) Chesapeake Chapter, we are writing to express our **support of HB583 Primary and Secondary Education - Virtual Schools – Alterations**. By requiring each county board to establish a virtual school, the bill ensures that no child is left behind due to geographic, health, or socio-economic barriers.

As pediatric nurse practitioners, we witness the profound impact that education has on a child's overall health and well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for flexible and accessible educational options, particularly for children with chronic illnesses, disabilities, or those who are immunocompromised. Virtual schools offer a viable solution for these vulnerable populations, allowing them to continue their education in a safe and supportive environment. For example, children with cancer face significant disruptions to their education due to frequent hospital visits, treatments, and the need for social isolation due to immunocompromise. Not every county has a strong, flexible Home and Hospital system. This system is also burdensome on healthcare providers to repeatedly complete paperwork to verify the child still qualifies every few months, including those children who have incurable disease. Virtual schools offer these children a way to stay connected with their peers and continue their education without compromising their health or causing unnecessary stress and frustration on parents and medical providers.

For these reasons the Maryland Chesapeake Chapter of NAPNAP extends **their support to HB583 Primary and Secondary Education - Virtual Schools – Alterations and requests a favorable report**. The pediatric advanced practice nurses of your state are grateful to you for your attention to these crucial issues. The Chesapeake Chapter of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners membership includes over 200 primary and acute care pediatric nurse practitioners who are committed to improving the health and advocating for Maryland's pediatric patients. If we can be of any further assistance, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Chesapeake Chapter legislative committee or president, Yvette Laboy at mdchesnapnapleg@outlook.com.

Sincerely,

Yvette Laboy

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