



**Maryland**  
**DENTAL HYGIENISTS'**  
**ASSOCIATION**

February 25, 2025

The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary  
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee  
House Office Building, Room 130  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

HOUSE BILL 771 – STUDENT HEALTH – PROGRAM FOR STUDENT DENTAL HEALTH  
– ESTABLISHED

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Dental Hygienists Association (MDHA) is the professional association for dental hygienists providing services in Maryland. As an organization, MDHA seeks to improve the public's total health by advancing the art and science of dental hygiene, including ensuring access to quality oral health care, increasing awareness of the cost-effective benefits of preventative dental services, promoting the highest standards of dental hygiene education, licensure, practice and research, and representing and promoting the interests of dental hygienists in Maryland.

In keeping with those goals, MDHA takes this opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 771 establishing a program for student dental health in Maryland public schools, including the creation and implementation of a certificate of dental health for students attending Maryland schools.

By establishing similar requirements for dental health certifications for young students in Maryland that are currently in place for physical health, HB771 elevates the importance of pediatric oral health and emphasizes its significant role as part of overall health. Oral health problems are one of the primary health conditions causing children to miss school in the United States, so using public policy to ensure these problems are addressed in a timely and effective manner is essential. Additionally, making dental health an essential part of attending school creates opportunity to educate students and their families about available preventative and restorative dental care and assistance programs, including those offered directly to students in public school systems throughout the State.

Maryland has been a leader in emphasizing the importance of oral health and taken several significant steps to ensure Marylanders have access to affordable, quality dental care. HB771 is another valuable tool in that vital public health initiative and MDHA thanks Delegate Harrison for her continued leadership on this issue. MDHA respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 771.