



House Appropriations Committee

March 3, 2026

House Bill 982 – *Higher Education – Tuition Exemption for Foster Care Recipients – Eligibility*

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied pediatric and adolescent healthcare practitioners in the State and is a strong and established advocate promoting the health and safety of all the children we serve. On behalf of MDAAP, we submit this letter of **support** for House Bill 982.

Adolescents and young adults transitioning out of foster care are disproportionately at risk for poorer health outcomes, housing instability, and economic hardship. Access to affordable higher education is a proven strategy to improve life trajectory, reduce health disparities, and support overall well-being.

This bill recognizes the unique challenges faced by youth exiting foster care, including educational disruption, limited financial resources, and reduced social supports. By lowering the age threshold from 13 to 8 years old in the definition of “foster care recipient,” this bill helps ensure that more young people who have experienced foster care have the opportunity to pursue post-secondary education without the burden of tuition costs. Extending access to tuition exemptions promotes educational attainment, long-term health, and economic stability.

House Bill 982 aligns with MDAAP’s mission to promote the health and developmental success of all children, including those who have spent time in foster care. For these reasons, MDAAP urges a favorable report on House Bill 982.

For more information call:

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