

**FAVORABLE Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 385  
Public Health – Recommendations for Immunizations, Screenings, and  
Preventive Services – Pharmacists Administration and Required Health  
Insurance Coverage (The Vax Act)**

**Health  
April 2, 2026  
1:00 pm**

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Public Policy Partners, on behalf of MSEA**

The Maryland State Education Association (MSEA) supports Senate Bill 385. This legislation strengthens access to preventive health care services by establishing a clear, science-based statewide framework for immunizations, screenings, and preventive services while incorporating thoughtful safeguards to ensure transparency, accountability, and reliance on authoritative medical guidance.

Senate Bill 385 requires the Maryland Secretary of Health to issue statewide recommendations for immunizations, preventive screenings, and preventive services based on generally accepted medical and scientific guidance. Importantly, the bill now includes additional procedural protections for certain preventive service recommendations. For services that are not immunizations and that have not received federal recommendations or top-tier ratings from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, the Secretary must first conduct a public notice and comment period, obtain an analysis from the Maryland Health Care Commission, and cite the recommendations of authoritative medical organizations supporting the decision. These provisions help ensure that any new recommendations are carefully evaluated, transparent, and grounded in credible medical evidence.

The bill further requires health insurance plans to cover recommended services without cost-sharing, removing financial barriers that often prevent individuals from accessing essential preventive care. In addition, Senate Bill 385 expands the authority of trained pharmacists to administer recommended vaccinations, increasing access points for preventive services across communities.



MSEA represents 76,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools and community colleges, teaching and supporting our almost 900,000 K-12 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA represents more than 44 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

MSEA's support for Senate Bill 385 is consistent with the Association's long-standing policy position that access to immunizations and preventive health services is essential to maintaining safe, healthy, and effective learning environments. Required immunizations and evidence-based health services help protect students and education employees, reduce the spread of preventable illness in schools, and support consistent attendance and instructional continuity.

The bill's focus on eliminating cost-sharing for preventive services advances equity by ensuring that families—including those in underserved communities—can access care before minor health concerns escalate into serious barriers to learning or work. Expanded access through pharmacists further strengthens community-based care, particularly in areas where access to primary care providers may be limited.

Finally, the amended implementation timeline provides additional time for thoughtful rollout and stakeholder engagement, further supporting effective and sustainable implementation of the bill's provisions.

For these reasons, MSEA urges the committee to issue a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 385.