

The Baltimore Teachers Union



AFT 340 AFL-CIO
Seton Business Park
5800 Metro Drive, 2nd Floor
Baltimore, MD 21215-3209

The Honorable Joan Carter Conway
Chairwoman, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

February 29, 2012

Dear Chairwoman Conway,

I offer this letter in strong support for Senate Bill 867, State Department of Education – Oral Health Education – Certification and Monitoring.

Although not emphasized enough, proper dental health care is imperative for our children's health, well-being and ability to focus and learn. With tooth decay documented as the most common chronic infectious disease among our children, I feel it is our responsibility to do everything possible to provide vital health education in this area.

Such education can only serve to assist in bringing down the number of children who are currently, and will in the future, suffer from this epidemic which proves to cause our children unnecessary pain and suffering and severely impacts their quality of life. In addition, such suffering robs our students of the ability to focus and concentrate on what should be a high priority, education.

If passed, the Oral Health Education Bill would provide countless families with the tools needed to recognize and avert what could otherwise lead to devastating results such as in the haunting case of 12 year old Deamonte Driver five years ago. A child should never be lost to such an avoidable fate and I feel strongly that we need to do all that we can to ensure that such a loss is never felt again.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this very important Bill.

Sincerely,

Marietta English
President
The Baltimore Teachers Union