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

Re: Senate Bill 867 "Oral Health Education –Certification and Monitoring"

Dear Senator Conway:

As a Maryland dentist and as president elect of the National Dental Association (NDA), I would like to thank you for your work to create a healthy future for the children and families in our state. Senate Bill 867 will help thousands of disadvantaged children and their parents by creating an educational system that is sensitized to the value of good oral health and one that highlights prevention as a way to stop the number one health related problem in children - tooth decay.

Having worked in Prince George's county for almost 30 years, treating children, adolescents and adults, I understand the importance of educating children and young parents about their oral health. The many dental problems we treat are preventable with proper guidance and education.

I have personally had contact with Mrs. Alyce Driver, the mother of the young man who died 5 years ago due to a dental infection, and it is heart wrenching to see how a mother must cope with the loss of a child because the system failed him. Because of this we must take action, and Senate Bill 867 is a perfect grass roots start to making sure that oral health is recognized as an integral part of overall health here in the state of Maryland.

Thank you again for your years of dedication and leadership and for supporting oral healthcare in Maryland. We are eager for a favorable report from the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee.

Sincerely,

Edward H. Chappelle Jr., D.D.S., F.A.G.D.