

National Dental Association Appreciates Governor's Wisdom To Make Oral Health Education A Priority

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Annapolis, Maryland. (May 22, 2012) - "The National Dental Association (NDA) appreciates the wisdom of Governor Martin O'Malley to make oral health education a priority in Maryland," was the response of Dr. Roy Irons, NDA President, upon learning that the legislation was now officially a state law. He commended Dr. Willie J. Richardson, President of the Maryland Dental Society (MDS), and the component society members in a telephone call soon after the 2012 *Oral Health Education - Certification and Monitoring* bill was signed into law. Dr. Irons went on to say that he will take the new Maryland law to the Mississippi legislature to be introduced during their next legislative session.

The NDA President expressed gratitude for the support of Maryland Senator Joan Carter Conway, Delegate Nathaniel Oaks and Delegate Sheila Hixson for sponsoring the 2012 *Oral Health Education - Certification and Monitoring* legislation. Irons conveyed appreciation for Maryland's 7th District Congressman Elijah Cummings' contribution and strong support of the law. The NDA leader said, "The steps made by the Maryland Dental Society working closely with their state and federal senators, congressman, delegates, educators and dental colleagues, sets the stage for the 36 component chapters of the NDA." MDS member, National Dental Association Past President and Legislative Chair, Dr. Leslie Grant agreed. She went on to say, "Legislative successes such as this exemplify the importance of organized dentistry. The undertaking stresses the importance of practitioners working together at the local level to implement change to heighten the level of oral health literacy amongst our youth and our educators." The Children's Oral Health Institute, the Maryland nonprofit organization who initiated the legislation hopes this will be the case. The organization believes the Maryland law can help to improve the oral health of children and families throughout the nation.

The NDA is excited about the prospects of other state governments, now more than ever, better appreciating the importance of oral health literacy and the relationship between dental care, and overall health and wellness. The NDA will encourage their 36 component societies to work closely with dental colleagues, educators and legislators in their states to get the Oral Health Education laws passed throughout the country.

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