

# SCHWARTZ, METZ & WISE, P.A.

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TO: The Honorable Peter A. Hammen, Chair  
Members, House Health & Government Operations Committee  
The Honorable Ariana Kelly

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
Joseph A. Schwartz, III  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman

DATE: February 24, 2015

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 355 – *Public Health – Dental Services for Adults – Coverage and Access*

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On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers (MACHC) and the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Maryland Section (MDACOG), we support House Bill 355.

House Bill 355 proposes to extend current Medicaid dental benefits for pregnant women to include the 60 day postpartum period for which they now receive full Medicaid benefits except dental. Maryland has long recognized the benefits of health care coverage for low-income pregnant woman. Maryland's Medicaid eligibility limit for pregnant woman is higher than that for other adults. The higher eligibility threshold is critical to ensure access to prenatal care services to Maryland's most vulnerable women which directly leads to improved birth outcomes and health status of the mother. A healthy mother is better able to care for her child after delivery.

House Bill's small, but targeted, benefit enhancement for a limited number of women could be critical to the health of both mothers and their babies. As this General Assembly is well aware – based on previous cases – oral health is a critical component of the overall health of an individual and should not be undervalued. Providing this enhanced benefit will undoubtedly result in cost savings that far exceed the fiscal impact of this legislation.

On behalf of the above named organizations a favorable report is requested.

**For more information call:**

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