



House Bill 375
Education - Maryland Council on Advancement of School-Based Health Centers
Health and Government Operations Committee
24 February 2015
SUPPORT

The *Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care Reform* (Coalition) is a nonpartisan, statewide alliance of thousands of individuals and 100 organizations. It works to promote health equity through access to high-quality, comprehensive and affordable health care for all Marylanders. We appreciate the opportunity to provide our support for House Bill 375 - Maryland Council on Advancement of School-Based Health Centers.

Maryland already has a School-Based Health Center Policy Advisory Committee. This bill is about how to utilize that existing resource in a more effective manner. The bill retools the existing advisory committee so that it can be more effective in meeting today's health reform and educational issues.

Maryland has been in the forefront of health care reform and, more specifically, delivery system reform. We are at an exciting stage in this process as we implement the New All-Payer Model (NAPM) under a Medicare Waiver. Combined with other reforms, such as the State Health Improvement Process (SHIP) and our State-Based Exchange, we are in a unique position to truly transform our health care delivery system. We will only succeed, however, if we look at these multiple initiatives in a holistic way that leverages the potential of individual elements, such as school-based health centers, into a holistic and integrated whole. My perspective on this comes from our work on the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and membership on multiple Exchange workgroups and committees and as a member of the Health Services Cost Review Commission's New All-Payer Model Advisory Council and as Chair of the Consumer Engagement Task Force.

It is clear in our work that school-based health centers are, for the most part, an untapped resource. And, that rather than being seen as part of an integrated system, they are overlooked in the process of designing and implementing health care reform.

This Council, tasked with the integration of school-based health centers into the design of health delivery system writ large, is a responsible approach. With that charge, and the scope and diversity of the membership, we believe that the Council called for in this legislation will provide a useful roadmap for the integration of School-Based Health Centers into the larger health delivery landscape. In so doing, they will serve not only the members of the communities in which they are housed, but the larger goals of health care reform, including the Coalition's core mission of health equity.

For these reasons, we support House Bill 375 and urge a favorable report.