



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Acting Secretary

January 14, 2021

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: HB 224 - Department of Information Technology - Study of a Common Information Technology Platform for Health Occupations Boards - Letter of Information

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of information for House Bill (HB) 224 - Department of Information Technology - Study of a Common Information Technology Platform for Health Occupations Boards.

MDH believes the boards would benefit from the economies of scale inherent in a common platform. Technology is constantly changing and requires upgrades; one comprehensive statewide system would be easier to maintain. The study would also ensure that vulnerabilities and common technology issues are identified, and lays the foundation for citizen-centric improvements that may allow for greater network adequacy.

The Department of Information Technology (DoIT) and MDH have encouraged the concept of a common information technology (IT) platform that would assist in improving the licensing and investigation processes of the health occupation boards for some time. The health occupation boards have generally declined to avail themselves of previous offers by DoIT and MDH to assist them in their IT projects. Specifically, the Maryland Board of Physicians and Board of Nursing (that are statutorily independent units from MDH) have expressed concerns about moving toward a comprehensive system. HB 224 would ensure that an IT audit is completed and that a list of vulnerabilities is developed so that a roadmap can be laid out for potential next steps. Additionally, a study on how a common platform would work for the boards and their licensees, as well as the costs involved with creating the system, may help address the boards' concerns.

Nevertheless, while this study would be important, due to COVID-19 efforts, MDH does not have the financial resources to support the implementation of the study.

If you have additional questions, please contact Assistant Secretary for Health Policy, Webster Ye, at (410) 260-3190 or webster.ye@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dennis R. Schrader". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the printed name.

Dennis R. Schrader
Acting Secretary