



The Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition

The MdcSWC, sponsored by the Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work, represents the interests of more than 9,500 licensed clinical social workers in Maryland.

TO: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Hogan-Rutherford Administration

FROM: Judith Gallant, LCSW-C, Chair, Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition

DATE: February 10, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT** – House Bill 407 – *Health Occupations – Health Care Staffing Shortage Emergency – Declaration and Licensing and Practice Requirements (Health Care Heroes Act of 2022)*

The Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition (MdcSWC), sponsored by the Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work, represents the interests of more than 9,500 licensed clinical social workers in Maryland. On behalf of MdcSWC, we **support with amendment** House Bill 407.

Currently, Title 14 of the Public Safety article grants the Governor the ability to declare a public health emergency, but for only 30 days at a time. To ensure that the State will be adequately prepared to deal with health emergencies in the future, House Bill 407 would grant authority to the Secretary of Health the power to declare a health care staffing shortage emergency in the State if certain conditions are met, and only for up to 180 days. The bill intends to relax licensure standards to bolster the current health care workforce, specifically targeting (1) an applicant for an initial health occupation license; (2) an individual who holds a valid, unexpired health occupation license issued in another state; (3) an inactive licensee; (4) a retired health care practitioner; and (5) a nursing graduate.

MdcSWC understands the Administration will be offering amendments that will allow the health occupation boards more discretion in how to expedite licenses. We believe that is the appropriate way to implement this. The Administration's amendments allow for more flexibility rather than the prescriptive method contained in the bill as introduced.

For these reasons, MdcSWC supports House Bill 407 with amendments.

For more information call:

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