



# Board of Nursing

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

February 10, 2022

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass  
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee  
Room 241 House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

**RE: HB 407 – Health Occupations – Healthcare Staffing Shortage Emergency – Declaration and Licensing and Practice Requirements (Healthcare Heroes Act of 2022) – Letter of Support with Amendments**

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Committee Members:

The Maryland Board of Nursing (the “Board”) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments to House Bill (HB) 407 – Health Occupations – Healthcare Staffing Shortage Emergency – Declaration and Licensing and Practice Requirements (Healthcare Heroes Act of 2022). This bill authorizes the Secretary of Health to declare a healthcare staffing shortage emergency in the state. This bill additionally requires each health occupations board to establish processes for the issuance of initial licenses, temporary licenses, and temporary practice letters on an expedited basis during a healthcare staffing shortage emergency.

The Board is in support of HB 407 as it bolsters efforts to address Maryland’s healthcare staffing shortage during a declared state of emergency. However, the bill as written would give nursing individuals with an undetermined criminal history background check the ability to apply for licensure and return to practice. The Board is very concerned about allowing individuals with unresolved disciplinary records to practice unrestricted as their applications are reviewed. This could be detrimental to the health and safety of vulnerable patients. A license in good standing indicates that an individual maintained all standards of practice, including renewal requirements, no records of unresolved discipline, and submitted paperwork to indicate a change of licensure status (inactive or non-renewed). The Board therefore proposes the following amendments that would result in a safer transition to practice for individuals who were placed on inactive status or who were retired.

Section 1-227. On page 4. Lines 10 – 12. Add:

**(3) “INACTIVE LICENSEE” MEANS A LICENSEE WHO HOLDS A HEALTH OCCUPATION LICENSE ISSUED BY A HEALTH OCCUPATIONS BOARD THAT HAS BEEN PLACED ON INACTIVE STATUS WITHIN THE PAST 8 YEARS AND WAS IN GOOD STANDING AT THAT TIME.**

Section 1-227. On page 4. Lines 21 – 24. Add:

**(5) “RETIRED HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER” MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HELD A VALID HEALTH OCCUPATION LICENSE ISSUED BY A HEALTH OCCUPATIONS BOARD WITHIN THE PAST 8 YEARS THAT IS NOT ACTIVE AND HAS NOT BEEN PLACED ON INACTIVE STATUS, AND WAS IN GOOD STANDING AT THE TIME OF EXPIRATION.**

For the reasons discussed above, the Board of Nursing respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for HB 407.

I hope this information is useful. For more information, please contact Iman Farid, Health Policy Analyst, at (410) 585 – 1536 ([iman.farid@maryland.gov](mailto:iman.farid@maryland.gov)) or Rhonda Scott, Deputy Director, at (410) 585 – 1953 ([rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov](mailto:rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov)).

Sincerely,



Gary N. Hicks  
Board President

**The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.**