



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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

February 10, 2022

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

RE: HB 407 – Health Occupations - Health Care Staffing Shortage Emergency - Declaration and Licensing and Practice Requirements (Health Care Heroes Act of 2022) – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of support on House Bill (HB) 407 – Health Occupations - Health Care Staffing Shortage Emergency - Declaration and Licensing and Practice Requirements (Health Care Heroes Act of 2022). HB 407 will authorize the Secretary of Health to declare a health care staffing shortage emergency in the State under certain circumstances and require Health Occupations Boards to establish or expedite processes for the issuance of initial licenses, temporary licenses, or temporary practice letters on an expedited basis during said emergency.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Maryland frontline medical workers have selflessly and tirelessly provided critical care to those in need. Maryland has one of the most successful pandemic responses in the country. Due in large part to this group of workers, our state positivity rate and case rates continue to decline while our vaccination rates continue to grow.

Over the past two years, this Administration took steps to ensure essential employees, specifically health care staff, received the support and resources necessary to carry out their critical mission of providing care for the most vulnerable Marylanders. HB 407 provides necessary support and outlines a clear path to quickly respond in the future, should another health emergency arise.

MDH fully supports HB 407 with the amendments proposed by the Administration and respectfully requests the committee return a favorable report. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Heather Shek, Director, Office of Governmental Affairs at (443) 695-4218 or heather.shek@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Dennis R. Schrader
Secretary