



Statement of Maryland Rural Health Association

To the Senate Judicial Proceedings

February 4, 2022

Senate Bill 298- Threat Against Public Health Official or Hospital Staff Member

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Smith and Vice Chair Waldstreicher and members of the Committee, the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) is in SUPPORT of House Bill 323 which would offer important protections to Maryland's health care workforce.

MRHA strongly supports this emergency legislation. At a time when public health officials and hospital staff are under tremendous pressure to care for our communities in the midst of a pandemic, unfortunately, these professionals are also increasingly on the receiving end of harassment, threats and workplace violence. This legislation is appropriate and timely.

MRHA's mission is to educate and advocate for the optimal health and wellness of rural communities and their residents. Membership is comprised of health departments, hospitals, community health centers, health professionals, and community members in rural Maryland.

Our top legislative priority this year is to "advance and support initiatives that respond to rural health care workforce needs, critical shortages, and future pipelines along with preventing workplace violence."

MHRA believes this legislation is vital to support our rural communities and we thank you for your consideration.

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