



Board of Dental Examiners

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

Arpana S. Verma Board Chair – Francis X. McLaughlin, Jr., Executive Director

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February 10, 2022

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

**RE: HB 625 - Commission to Study the Health Care Workforce Crisis in Maryland –
Establishment - Letter of Support**

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Committee Members:

The Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners is submitting this letter of support for House Bill (HB) 625 - Commission to Study the Health Care Workforce Crisis in Maryland. The Commission consists of a number of individuals including: two members of the Senate of Maryland, two members of the House of Delegates, the Secretary of Health or the Secretary's designee, the Chairman of the Maryland Health Care Commission, and the executive directors of each Maryland health occupations boards. The Secretary of Health serves as the chair. The State agencies represented on the Commission would jointly provide staff for the Commission.

Topics to be reported upon include but are not limited to: the extent of the health care workforce shortage in the State, including the extent of shortages in different settings including in-home care, hospitals, private practice, nursing homes, and hospice care. The Commission is also charged with examining turnover rates and average length of tenure for shortages, as well as short term solutions to address immediate needs.

With regard to the State's health occupations boards, the Commission is charged with examining:

- (1) which health occupations boards have backlogs of applicants for licensure and certification;
- (2) determining whether expediting or streamlining the licensing or certification process for specific health occupations is a viable option;
- (3) determining whether implementing additional temporary licensure or certification for specific health occupations is a viable option;
- (4) the relationship between the health occupations boards and the Maryland Department of Health to determine what authority the Secretary should have over the boards, and what additional support the Department of Health could provide the boards to assist with workloads, overhead, staffing, technology improvements, and other areas identified by the Commission.

The Dental Board supports the bill. For quite a number of years the Board has been able to provide applicants for initial licensure and license renewal with exceptional service. Turnaround

time has averaged 10 days or less. However, with respect to adequate staffing, the Board continues to face a number of hurdles, sometimes waiting upwards of between one and a half to two years to fill vacant PIN positions. Providing a forum to discuss staffing issues, the Board's need for autonomy, and the Board's relationship with the Department of Health would be welcome and productive.

The Dental Board therefore requests that HB 625 receive a favorable report.

I hope that this information is helpful. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Dr. Arpana Verma, Board President at 240-498-8159, asverma93@gmail.com, or Dr. Edwin Morris, the Board's Legislative Committee Chair at 410-218-4203. In addition, the Board's Executive Director, Mr. Frank McLaughlin may be reached at 443-878-5253, frank.mclaughlin@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,



Arpana S. Verma, D.D.S.
Board President

The opinion of the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners expressed in this letter of support position paper does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the administration.