



576 Johnsville Road
Sykesville, MD 21784

TO: Finance Committee
FROM: LeadingAge Maryland
SUBJECT: Senate Bill 774, Maryland Pathway to Nursing Program and Advisory Committee – Establishment
DATE: March 7, 2023
POSITION: **Favorable with Amendment**

LeadingAge Maryland supports with an amendment on Senate Bill 774, Maryland Pathway to Nursing Program and Advisory Committee – Establishment

LeadingAge Maryland is a community of more than 140 not-for-profit aging services organizations serving residents and clients through continuing care retirement communities, affordable senior housing, assisted living, nursing homes and home and community-based services. Members of LeadingAge Maryland provide health care, housing, and services to more than 20,000 older persons each year. Our mission is to be the trusted voice for aging in Maryland, and our vision is that Maryland is a state where older adults have access to the services they need, when they need them, in the place they call home. We partner with consumers, caregivers, researchers, public agencies, faith communities and others who care about aging in Maryland.

Senate Bill 774 establishes the Maryland Pathway to Nursing Program in the Maryland Department of Health. Before the Secretary of Health implements the program statewide, the Secretary must implement a pilot program at community colleges in at least two geographically diverse areas in the state that offer licensed practical nursing programs. Under the legislation, a Maryland Pathway to Nursing Advisory Committee will be formed to assist the Secretary in the development and implementation of the program.

There are a variety of barriers and factors that might keep an individual from pursuing and attaining additional education and/or licensures. Given the shortage of clinicians and caregivers throughout our state, which has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that individuals who wish to further their nursing education and licensure are given

every opportunity to do so. There are not enough individuals working in the fields of healthcare and aging services to meet the needs of Marylanders needing support and care. Importantly, this bill seeks to support professional growth for certified nursing assistants, who are truly the backbone of our healthcare system.

Amendment: Importantly, Senate Bill 774 establishes a Maryland Pathway to Nursing Advisory Committee. LeadingAge Maryland respectfully requests that it is included in this Advisory Committee.

LeadingAge Maryland is invested in ensuring that professionals who are qualified to deliver care in places that most need it, like nursing homes, are allowed growth and a facilitated opportunity to do so.

For these reasons, LeadingAge Maryland respectfully requests a favorable report with amendment on Senate Bill 774.

**For more information, please contact Aaron J. Greenfield, Greenfield Law, LLC,
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