



*Keeping You Connected...Expanding Your Potential...
In Senior Care and Services*

TO: The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Mary Beth Carozza

FROM: Kevin Heffner, CEO

DATE: March 14, 2023

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 647 – *State Board of Pharmacy – Board Membership and Delegated Pharmacy Acts*

On behalf of the LifeSpan Network, the largest and most diverse senior care provider association in Maryland representing nursing facilities, assisted living providers, continuing care retirement communities, medical adult day care centers, senior housing communities and other home and community-based services, we **support** the provision in Senate Bill 647 related to the ability of a pharmacist to delegate to a registered pharmacy technician or a registered pharmacy intern the act of entering prescription-related data into databases or patient charts when the technician or intern is working at a remote location.

Our members work in partnership with long-term care pharmacies to ensure our residents receive timely pharmaceutical services. Like all areas of health care, part of this service involves administrative tasks, such as entering prescription-related data into databases (such as CRISP) or into patient charts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Maryland Board of Pharmacy waived the requirement that a licensed pharmacist be present during the task of “data-entry.” After Maryland lifted its State of Emergency and this regulation once again became enforceable, it has been very difficult for our long-term care pharmacy partners to retain or hire individuals for this role. Many have simply found jobs that have allowed them to maintain working from home or a hybrid work environment.

Senate Bill 647 will afford our long-term care pharmacy partners with the hiring flexibility needed to ensure a continued, high rate of service to our member facilities and the residents cared for by them. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the work landscape and Maryland’s law must accommodate for it, provided these changes can be done in a safe manner. Senate Bill 647 accomplishes both goals, and we urge a favorable vote.