



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

February 22, 2023

House Bill 454: Health Occupations - Licenses, Certificates, and Registrations – Immigrants

Written Testimony Only

POSITION: FAVORABLE

On behalf of the members of the Health Facilities Association of Maryland (HFAM), we appreciate the opportunity to express our support for House Bill 454. HFAM represents skilled nursing centers and assisted living communities in Maryland, as well as associate businesses that offer products and services to healthcare providers. Our members provide services and employ individuals in nearly every jurisdiction of the state.

House Bill 454 prohibits a health occupations board from denying a license, certification, or registration to an immigrant if the individual meets all educational, training, or professional requirements for licensure, certification, or registration.

Healthcare across all settings is a people-helping-people enterprise. That is especially true in long-term and post-acute care settings such as skilled nursing and rehabilitation centers, assisted living campuses, continuing care retirement communities, and adult day centers.

We are facing a healthcare workforce crisis that predates the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic dramatically worsened the workforce shortage and proved that there is no individual hospital, nursing home, or physician's office workforce. There is one healthcare workforce in Maryland—and it is shorthanded.

We need all the caring hearts and trained hands we can get in healthcare. Current immigration status should not be a limiting factor in that.

Together going forward, we must be intentional about creating healthcare jobs and growing careers focused specifically on underserved communities. We must also acknowledge that there are countless examples demonstrating that immigrants are the backbone that built much of this country, including in healthcare.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report from the Committee on House Bill 454.

Submitted by:

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