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To: The Honorable Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Chair and  
Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee

From: The Office of the Attorney General

Re: Senate Bill 187 (Health Occupations – Licenses, Certificates, and Registrations -  
Immigrants): Letter of Support

The Office of the Attorney General supports SB0187, which requires health occupations boards to license a lawfully present immigrant otherwise qualified by using a tax identification number if the applicant does not have a social security number.

This change provides employment opportunities for qualified immigrant members of our community, strengthens our healthcare workforce, and makes Maryland better prepared to meet the healthcare needs of our residents. It is also consistent with the findings and recommendations in the 2021 Annual Report of the Skilled Immigrant Task Force, <https://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/skilledimmigrantannrepfy21.pdf>. Nearly half of other states have enacted laws providing licensure, if not across professions and populations, then for certain workforce shortage occupations or immigrant status. See, <https://www.csg.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2022/09/Licensing-for-Immigrants-and-Refugees-1.pdf>.

This legislation passed with sizeable majorities in each chamber with amendments to ensure the applicant is lawfully present, to provide for reporting from the health occupation boards to the Department of Assessments and Taxation, and to correct a few minor drafting errors.

The Office of the Attorney General continues to support SB187, as amended, and we urge the Committee to provide a favorable report.