

Written Testimony Submitted by:

Jessica Shirkey
100 Woodmans Court
Essex, MD 21221
jshirkey@ccbcmd.edu
443-840-2017

Subject: Opposition to HB0934 - Radiation Therapy, Radiography, Nuclear Medicine Technology, and Radiology Assistance - Limited Licensed Radiologic Technologist

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 0934, which proposes the implementation of limited licensure for radiologic technologists in the state of Maryland. My name is Jessica Shirkey, and I am a registered Radiologic Technologist and Radiography student educator with 15 years of experience. Additionally, I hold a bachelor's degree in medical imaging. I understand the challenges the healthcare system faces, particularly in the realm of staffing issues. As someone deeply invested in the field of Radiography, I believe that the proposed limited licensure is not the appropriate solution to address these challenges. Instead, it poses a serious threat to the high standards of patient care and diagnostic imaging that we strive to uphold in our state.

Radiologic technologists play a crucial role as the eyes of the medical field, and we are held to rigorous standards to ensure the provision of exceptional patient care and the production of high-quality diagnostic images for accurate diagnoses. Current radiography students graduate with an associate degree in applied sciences, complete the national ARRT certification exam, and undergo extensive training, including a minimum of 600 lab hours, 1200 clinical hours, and 2000 didactic hours. Creating a tier of lower level undereducation individuals to perform most of the same tasks as Radiographers will be detrimental to the profession and the Maryland healthcare system in years to come.

The staffing issues that have arisen are, in part, a consequence of the rapid expansion of urgent care facilities, which have proliferated across the state to meet the needs of the community. Although these facilities have made standard care easier for Marylanders, this expansion, however, has inadvertently created a problem by limiting educators' turnaround time to produce highly skilled and qualified workers. Rather than addressing the root causes of the staffing issues, the proposed limited scope licensure appears to be a reactive measure that may compromise the quality of Radiologic services across the state. Implementing a limited scope licensure has the potential to put the community at risk by allowing subpar care and increasing radiation exposure. The current comprehensive training ensures that radiologic technologists have the knowledge and skills to provide safe and effective imaging procedures. Diluting these standards through limited licensure could have severe consequences for patient safety and diagnostic accuracy.

I urge you to reconsider and oppose HB0934, as it may have unintended and detrimental consequences for the healthcare standards we strive to maintain in Maryland. I appreciate your attention to this matter and your commitment to the well-being of our community. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jessica Shirkey BSMI ARRT RT (R)(MR)