



TO: The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Bonnie Cullison

FROM: Danna L. Kauffman
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DATE: February 6, 2024

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 354 – *Maryland Pathway to Nursing Program and Advisory Committee – Establishment*

On behalf of the LifeSpan Network, the Maryland Association of Adult Day Services, the Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association, and the Hospice & Palliative Care Network of Maryland, we respectfully **support** House Bill 354, which creates a Maryland Pathway to Nursing Advisory Committee along with the corresponding Maryland Pathway to Nursing. The bill will establish two pilot programs in diverse geographical areas of the State with the purpose of assisting certified nursing assistants enrolled in licensed practical nursing programs with the resources to succeed and graduate from the program.

Maryland is facing a critical shortage of licensed practical nurses and registered nurses. The 2022 State of Maryland's Health Care Workforce Report indicates that, by 2035, an additional 13,800 registered nurses and an additional 9,200 licensed practical nurses will be needed. The three industries with the greatest demand are nursing homes, home health, and residential care. Too often, we hear stories of candidates that are forced to drop out of programs because they cannot afford to continue. House Bill 354 seeks to address some of these common resources so that Maryland can begin to address its shortfall.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on House Bill 354.