



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE**  
**HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**  
February 6, 2024  
House Bill 354: Maryland Pathway to Nursing Program and Advisory  
Committee – Establishment  
*Written Only Testimony*

**POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT**

On behalf of the members of the Health Facilities Association of Maryland (HFAM), we appreciate the opportunity to express our support with amendment for House Bill 354. 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 354 establishes the Maryland Pathway to Nursing Program in the Maryland Department of Health; requires the Secretary to establish a pilot program at community colleges in at least two geographically diverse areas in the State that offer licensed practical nursing programs before implementing the Program statewide; requires an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly on implementation of the Program; and establishes the Maryland Pathway to Nursing Advisory Committee to assist in the development of the Program.

**We respectfully request that HB 354 be amended to add the Health Facilities Association of Maryland (HFAM) and LeadingAge Maryland to the Advisory Committee.** We believe that the expertise of leaders from each organization will add value and insight to the Committee. Both organizations, in addition to the organizations already listed in the legislation, represent a diverse membership that should be included when discussing issues related to the nursing workforce.

Healthcare today, especially nursing, faces the greatest shortage and the most tremendous opportunity in workforce development in a generation. To meet this opportunity and succeed, we must deploy new tools and create innovative public-private partnerships.

Workforce recruitment and retention challenges have only grown worse over the last several years. This legislation is important to ensure that we continue to find solutions to staffing challenges and remove barriers to entry for those pursuing a career in nursing in order to produce more licensed professionals across the continuum. Together we have a tremendous opportunity to place resources that support nurses and alleviate the shortage of nursing professionals.

**For these reasons, and with the proposed amendment, we request a favorable report from the Committee on House Bill 354.**

*Submitted by:*  
Joseph DeMattos, Jr.  
President and CEO  
(410) 290-513