



Date: January 20, 2024

To: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Reference: Senate Bill 248- Department of Service and Civic Innovation - Maryland Corps Program Service Year Option Pathways - Revisions

Position: Letter of Support

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members,

On behalf of LifeBridge Health, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on SB248. LifeBridge Health is a regional health system comprising Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, an independent academic medical center; Levindale Hebrew Geriatric Center and Hospital in Baltimore; Northwest Hospital, a community hospital in Baltimore County; Carroll Hospital, a sole community hospital in Carroll County; Grace Medical Center (formerly Bon Secours Hospital), a freestanding medical facility in West Baltimore; and Center for Hope a center of excellence focused on provided hope and services for trauma survivors in Baltimore City.

Career exploration, positive reinforcement, mentorship, and paid internships can lead to further opportunities for advancement. Establishing career and education pipelines with youth and community members support pathways to meaningful opportunities that is critical to ensuring we are cultivating a future workforce. These programs benefit the participants and the sponsoring organizations. LifeBridge Health offers apprenticeship programs to help people gain job readiness skills and experience. These programs include paid internships, job readiness training, and career assessment.

LifeBridge Health was selected as an approved site to participate in the Maryland Corps Program.

- We hired two recent high school graduates who are residents of Baltimore City and Baltimore County into existing jobs,
- Participants were integrated into the culture of our organization and partnered with learners who are driven to see participants succeed in the program,
- Provided wrap-around supports from program (success coaches, companion online learning, monthly in person sessions with cohorts of other members).

With the expansion of the program, we would kindly recommend the Administration consider slight modifications to the program to improve on overall process. This legislation does not address those issues, however as we expand eligibility, we do anticipate bringing on more participants in the future.

We would recommend streamlined communication, one point of contact, more timely grant agreements, and alignment of host organization policies within the program. We are extremely proud to be a part of the growing opportunities for young people while building foundational workforce members.

CARE BRAVELY

We thank the Committee for the consideration. We support Governor Moore and his administration in creating programs like the Maryland Corps Service Year Program to expand and engage eager and qualified participants, for that we request a favorable vote for SB248.

For more information, please contact:

Jennifer Witten, M.B.A.

Vice President, Government Relations & Community Development

jwitten2@lifebridgedhealth.org

Mobile: 505-688-3495