

March 28, 2025

The Honorable Pamela G. Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Maryland State Senate
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

On behalf of TidalHealth Peninsula Regional, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to House Bill 905.

TidalHealth Peninsula Regional has well-established, evidence-based processes in place to determine and adjust appropriate staffing levels across our hospital. These include multidisciplinary huddles held multiple times per day, a real-time electronic bed board system that monitors patient placement and throughput, and ongoing collaboration between nursing leaders, charge nurses, and care teams. Our approach aligns with the standards set forth by The Joint Commission and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), which prioritize patient safety, appropriate clinical staffing, and positive patient outcomes.

We strongly value the input of our frontline team members and actively engage them in staffing decisions through a shared governance model. This model empowers bedside caregivers to participate in decision-making at the unit and organizational levels, including through staffing councils, performance improvement committees, and regular staff meetings. This type of engagement ensures that staffing decisions are made with direct insight from those who are delivering care while also fostering transparency, accountability, and team ownership of patient outcomes.

Our staffing plans are dynamic and are continuously assessed throughout the day to account for changing patient volumes, acuity levels, staff availability, and care complexity. The needs of a hospital can shift significantly within hours, and staffing decisions must be made in real time by clinical leaders with the training and operational insight to respond effectively. A centralized staffing committee, as proposed in HB 905, lacks the flexibility and speed necessary to make immediate, patient-centered adjustments.

Furthermore, we strongly believe that clinical staffing decisions must be led by clinical professionals. Determining safe and effective staffing requires expertise in clinical care, regulatory compliance, licensure requirements, and hospital operations. While we support a collaborative, inclusive approach, those with the appropriate clinical knowledge must guide these decisions, supported by feedback from frontline caregivers and informed by operational realities.

TidalHealth Peninsula Regional remains deeply committed to supporting and retaining a strong, resilient workforce. We share the General Assembly's goal of addressing healthcare workforce challenges and improving care delivery across Maryland. However, we are concerned that HB 905 does not reflect the realities of hospital operations and does not address the root causes of the clinical workforce shortage, including training pipelines, burnout, and recruitment and retention barriers.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to issue an **unfavorable report** on House Bill 905.

Sincerely,



Christopher C. Hall
Vice President / Chief Business Officer