



Maryland Community Health System

Bill:	Senate Bill 216 – Health Occupations – Nursing – Loan Repayment, Education, and Sunset Extension (Building Opportunities for Nurses Act of 2025)
Committee:	Senate Finance
Hearing Date:	January 28, 2025
Position:	Support with Amendment

The Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *Senate Bill 216 – Health Occupations – Nursing – Loan Repayment, Education, and Sunset Extension (Building Opportunities for Nurses Act of 2025)*. The bill takes a multi-faceted approach to addressing the nursing shortage.

Maryland Community Health System is a network of federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) that provide primary care, behavioral, and dental services to underserved communities. Our mission has been hampered by the ongoing shortage of nurses, which is not expected to abate.ⁱ This legislation addresses the nursing shortage by:

- **Expanding Endorsement Options for Nurses:** The bill recognizes that nurses with substantial experience can be competent even if their nursing educational program does not meet Maryland-specific requirements. In certain circumstance, the Board will be able to waive educational requirements for out-of-state nurses with unencumbered licenses;
- **Extend Loan Repayment Program:** The bill extends a loan repayment program that supports nurses working in primary care in underserved areas; and
- **Support Clinical Placement of Nurse Practitioner Students by Extending Tax Credit for Preceptorships:** There is a shortage of clinical placements for advanced practiced registered nurses, including nurse practitioners (NPs). The bill supports clinical placements for NP students by extending a program that provides tax credit for preceptors. We would request a friendly amendment to align the bill with the provisions of *HB 496 - Income Tax - Credits for Nursing Program Preceptors in Areas with*

Health Care Workforce Shortages – Alterations. The amendments would make small adjustments in the number of hours required for rotations, so that the law reflects current practice.

We request a favorable report with the amendments to align provisions of the bill with HB 496. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

ⁱ <https://mhaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Maryland-Nurse-Workforce-Projections-GlobalData.pdf>