



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL AFL-CIO

7 School Street • Annapolis, Maryland 21401-2096

Balto. (410) 269-1940 • Fax (410) 280-2956

President

Donna S. Edwards

Secretary-Treasurer

Gerald W. Jackson

**HB 783 - Health Occupations - Structural Racism Training
House Health and Government Operations Committee
February 19, 2025**

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 783. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

Structural racism is when laws and policies prioritize certain groups over others, resulting in unequal opportunities for healthcare, jobs, housing, education, and a safe environment. Acknowledging and addressing these systemic inequalities in the healthcare field is essential to improving patient outcomes, especially for communities who have long-experienced discrimination in healthcare settings.

HB 783 takes a crucial step toward addressing these health disparities by incorporating structural racism education training, requiring healthcare professionals seeking license or certificate renewal to complete the training on implicit bias and structural racism.

Unconscious biases and racial prejudices among healthcare providers, including physicians and nurses, significantly contribute to the disproportionate health burdens faced by minority communities. Providing equitable and unbiased care is the responsibility of all clinicians. This legislation equips healthcare professionals with the knowledge and tools to recognize and mitigate these biases in their practice.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on HB 783.