



# Board of Nursing

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Ryan Moran, DrPH, MHSA, Acting Secretary

March 18th, 2025

The Honorable Joseline Pena-Melnyk  
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee  
House Office Building, Room 240  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: Senate Bill 72 – Health Occupations Boards - English Proficiency Requirements and Licensure by Endorsement for Nursing**

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Board of Nursing (the Board) respectfully submits this letter of support as amended for Senate Bill (SB) 72 Health Occupations Boards - English Proficiency Requirements and Licensure by Endorsement for Nursing.

As part of the State's effort to improve healthcare access and the workforce shortage, the Board has been diligently working to increase the number of qualified nurses in the State while maintaining our high standards of practice that keep Maryland patients safe and healthy. The Board has supported a number of initiatives that would expedite the licensure process for foreign educated nurses looking to work in the State, such as collaborating with the Welcome Back Center of Suburban Maryland and the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) to add additional English language proficiency (ELP) exam options. As a result of these partnerships, three additional ELP exams were adopted by the Board in 2024, those exams being the Michigan English Test (MET), Pearson Test of English (PTE), and Occupational English Test (OET). SB0072 continues this expansion by establishing additional ELP exam options that applicants may use to meet minimum qualifications for licensure. In addition, the bill provides that holding a valid, unencumbered multistate license under the Nurse Licensure Compact shall constitute sufficient proof of proficiency in the communication of the English language.

Additionally, this session, the Board, in collaboration with MDH, has introduced a Departmental, which adds an alternative path to licensure for endorsement applicants, specifically by permitting certain applicants to show evidence of additional educational credentials, beyond the individual's basic nursing education credential, in order to meet the minimum educational requirements for licensure by endorsement. SB0072 further expands the available pathways to licensure by endorsement by permitting individuals that hold a valid, unencumbered multistate license under the Nurse Licensure Compact to obtain licensure by endorsement in Maryland without the need to reproduce evidence of the applicant's nursing education.

Both bills allow more nurses to begin work in the State without delay, improving healthcare accessibility in underserved areas, particularly those bordering other states like Western Maryland and the Eastern Shore. As amended, the bill makes the process simpler for the Board by removing the requirement to maintain on its website a list of states that meet the ELP requirements, and replaces it with a requirement that the Board prominently maintain on its website a statement that an applicant may not be required to provide additional evidence of English proficiency if they have already shown proof through licensure in another state. By streamlining the process, the bill encourages a more diverse healthcare workforce and increases service availability in communities with critical needs.

Thank you again for your time. Again, we would like to encourage the committee to give a favorable report for SB0072. For more information, please contact Ms. Mitzi Fishman, Director of Legislative Affairs, at 410-585-2049 or [mitzi.fishman@maryland.gov](mailto:mitzi.fishman@maryland.gov), or Ms. Rhonda Scott, Executive Director, at 410-585-1953 or [rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov](mailto:rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christine Lechlitter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christine Lechlitter  
Board President

**The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.**