



Hospice & Palliative Care Network
OF MARYLAND

TO: The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
Members, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
The Honorable Adelaide C. Eckhardt

FROM: Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Richard A. Tabuteau

DATE: February 13, 2020

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 576 – *Health Occupations – Nurse Practitioners – Certification of Competency and Incapacity*

On behalf of the LifeSpan Network, the Maryland Association of Adult Day Services, and the Hospice & Palliative Care Network of Maryland, we **support** Senate Bill 576.

This bill authorizes a nurse practitioner who has examined a disabled person to be one of the two health care practitioners who may sign a certificate of competency for a petition for guardianship of a disabled person. In addition, this bill also authorizes a nurse practitioner to be one of the two health care practitioners who can certify that a patient is: (1) incapable of making an informed decision regarding specified treatment; (2) in a terminal condition or has an end-stage condition; or (3) in a persistent vegetative state.

Currently, the law, in most cases, requires the certifications be made by two physicians. In long-term care and in hospice, it can be difficult to find two physicians who can examine and make the necessary certifications, which can result in care delays. This is especially true in the rural communities. Given that nurse practitioners are serving as primary care providers and in other roles, we believe that it would be appropriate to expand the current law to include them as an option for certification. Therefore, the above-referenced associations urge a favorable vote.

For more information call:

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