



Board of Nursing

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall,
Secretary

February 12, 2020

The Honorable Shane Pendergrass
Chair, Health and Governmental Affairs Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: HB 0317 – Mental Health – Involuntary Admissions – Procedures - Letter of Support

Dear Chair Pendergrass:

The Maryland Board of Nursing (“the Board”) is submitting this letter of support for HB 0317 – Mental Health – Involuntary Admissions - Procedures. This bill authorizes a facility or Veterans’ Administration hospital to take an individual who is involuntarily admitted under certain circumstances into confinement on observation status. The bill also requires an individual confined on observation status to be examined within 24 hours by a physician, psychologist, or psychiatric nurse practitioner. The regulations adopted shall require that an impartial hearing officer receive testimony from the physician, psychologist, or psychiatric nurse practitioner.

Current evaluation guidelines often cause delays in mental health placement. Many of the members of the Board of Nursing provide treatment to mental health patients within environments where access to effective and efficient care is prolonged due to a delay in consultation services. This bill is necessary to help minimize the delay in access to mental health treatment.

For the reasons discussed above, the Board of Nursing submits this letter of support for HB 317. For more information, please contact Rhonda Scott, Deputy Director, at (410) – 585 – 1953 (rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov) or Karen E. B. Evans, Executive Director, at (410) – 585 – 1914 (karene.evans@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

Gary N. Hicks
Board President

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