



EMERGENCY NURSES
ASSOCIATION

Maryland State Council

Safe Practice Safe Care

To: Maryland House Judiciary Committee 2020
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From: Maryland State Council of the Emergency Nurses Association

Date: January 21, 2020

Re: Maryland Emergency Nurses Association requests a **FAVORABLE** vote on HB126,
HB126 - Peace Orders – Workplace Violence

Dear Chairman Clippinger and members of the Maryland House Judiciary Committee,

The Maryland State Council of the Emergency Nurses Association is in favor of House Bill (HB) 126, legislation that would allow, amongst other things, for certain provisions of law pertaining to filing, issuance, and modification of certain peace orders filed by employers for certain acts

committed against an employee and shielding of certain court records in these instances: **HB126 - Peace Orders – Workplace Violence.**

Maryland Emergency Nurses are on the front line of caring for patients during high stress situations. Far too often, our patients do not return the same care and compassion we show them. It is estimated that 100% of Emergency Nurses report experiencing verbal abuse and approximately 70% report being physically assaulted by patients in the Emergency Department setting. Despite the high incidence of workplace violence, rarely are these incidents reported, let alone charges filed against the aggressors. Contributing to this underreporting is the belief that employers are unable or unwilling to support the employee as well as fear of retaliation against the victim related to the aggressor's ability to easily identify and locate their victim(s).

HB126 would allow an employer to petition for a peace order protecting the employee as victim of certain circumstances such as assault that causes bodily harm. This adds a layer of protection to the victim which will ease the fear of retaliation by the aggressor. Additionally, under this Act the employee will be protected from retaliation by the employer. In turn, victims in these situations will be more likely to take appropriate legal steps against their aggressor which will ultimately improve safety in this volatile work environment.

A favorable vote on HB126 is a much needed step in the right direction to improve safety and ease the minds of victims of violent crimes that occur in the workplace, including those of us who work every day to provide care and compassion to the very people who commit these crimes.

Sincerely,

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