



Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill Number: HB 124

Title: Occupational Health Standards to Protect Employees – Aerosol Transmissible Diseases and COVID-19

Hearing Date: January 28, 2021

Position: Support

The Maryland Nurses Association (MNA) supports *House Bill 124 – Occupational Health Standards to Protect Employees – Aerosol Transmissible Diseases and COVID-19*. The bill would require Maryland Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH), in consultation with Maryland Department of Health, to issue an Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS), which will establish mandatory and enforceable workplace protection standards to protect employees against infectious diseases, including COVID-19. Nurses and other healthcare professionals face unique risks and exposures related to aerosol transmissible diseases, especially in hospital and healthcare facility settings. This bill establishes feasible standards, including respiratory protection and personal protective equipment standards, physical distancing standards, sanitation standards, ventilation standards, and training protocols. This bill, by creating a uniform emergency standard for COVID-19, will help protect the health and safety of employees and allow nurses to continue to care for patients affected by this pandemic. This bill will help protect nurses from further unnecessary exposure and help keep them at the bedside.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Suhani Chitalia at (240) 506-9325 or schitalia@policypartners.net.

