



SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

January 26, 2021

TESTIMONY

**Submitted by
Dr. Clifford Coppersmith, President**

SB 13 – Certified Nursing Assistants – Certificate Renewal – Training Program Requirements Position: Favorable

As the President of Chesapeake College I strongly support passage of Senate Bill 13 (Sponsored by Senator Addie Eckardt) to address the ongoing crisis in providing for Certified Nursing Assistant re-certification. Many CNAs with expired certifications are impeded and discouraged by the cost and time commitment required to renew their certification and do not return to the direct care workforce as a result. As currently written, if a CNA's certification expires they must complete a whole course of original training over a period of months to attain a credential to return to work. My colleagues, including Dr. Ray Hoy (Wor-Wic) and Dr. Mary Bolt (Cecil), also support this bill.

Senate Bill 13 provides a mechanism for CNAs to re-certify through shorter term refresher training that provides a worker friendly alternative and still provides for the essential training needed to assure quality health care for patients in hospital and other care settings, including home health care.

As a provider for this type of work-ready training, Chesapeake College along with other institutions in the Maryland community college system will be prepared to provide this refresher training if this Bill is made into law. Even before COVID-19 CNAs were in short supply. Now more than ever we must assure that these frontline caregivers are permitted the opportunity to return to the workforce.

Approving these training requirements will streamline the certification process and allow more former CNAs to regain their certification. Thus, providing the care provider with added tools to improve the possibility for higher pay. This bill can be a win-win for the in-home care industry as well as the whole medical industry. The ever-growing aging community is in desperate need of skilled care providers with their desire to stay in their home longer. Providing these adjusted training requirements will ensure the need is met in a timelier fashion. Our higher learning institutions have limited resources for providing the initial CNA training. This amended training requirement will ensure quicker turnaround to the workforce, which is now desperately needed.

On behalf of students, current certified nursing assistants (and those to be) and my fellow presidents in the Maryland community college system, I urge passage of Senate Bill 13.