

MARYLAND WORKFORCE

A L L I N C E

Date: March 17, 2021
Committee: Finance
Legislation: Testimony on SB 894 Post-Crisis Jobs Act of 2021
Position: Favorable with Amendments

Good Afternoon Chair Kelley and Members of the Committee. My name is Joseph DeMattos, and I serve as Chair of the Maryland Workforce Alliance. The Maryland Workforce Alliance is a coalition of 36 trade associations, labor unions and apprenticeship providers that have come together to support common sense workforce legislation. The Maryland Workforce Alliance unites trade associations, unions, and nonprofits to promote a world-class workforce in Maryland. We endeavor to bridge the skills gap and address critical employment shortages in key fields and to forge pathways that connect employers, apprenticeship sponsors, and job seekers.

The Maryland Workforce Alliance works for the creation of jobs in markets experiencing labor shortages through career and technical education in public schools, certificate programs in community colleges, youth apprenticeship programs and registered apprenticeship programs. MWA's work ensures there is increased engagement in the development and execution of workforce skills training programs.

Senate Bill 894 includes provisions authorizing digital learning which will place online training on equal footing with onsite training for licensing boards. The bill also authorizes for fiscal years 2023-2025, 75% of any increase in community college funding to be used towards workforce development and skills training. The proposed legislation also provides grant funding to assist with the various workforce training initiatives. First, 40 million dollars in federal and state funds by 2023, to assist with the conversion of digital learning. Second, 20 million dollars by 2023, under the Basic Numeracy and Literacy Skill Program to assist public and private programs that meet or exceed career, college and readiness standards in numeracy and literacy. The bill stipulates a \$5000 grant to students under this Program. Third, 50 million dollars in federal and state funds by 2023 is offered to train students for jobs in the High Growth Sector Industries Program. This program will bolster training for the unemployed; youth ages 16-24; adults, ex-offenders and other populations in need of re-employment assistance.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government approved an eight-hour online emergency training program for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs). It is imperative that nursing homes in Maryland have all the tools available to recruit, train, and retain CNAs during the ongoing pandemic and beyond. Consequently, the Maryland Workforce Alliance is requesting that SB 894 be amended to allow CNAs who became certified during the state of emergency without in person training to continue that certification once the state of emergency ends and to allow such CNAs to continue their training to become geriatric nursing assistants.

This bill and the proposed amendment align with the mission of the Maryland Workforce Alliance, and we strongly encourage this Committee to vote favorable with amendments on SB 894.

AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 894

(First Reading File Bill)

On page 4, after line 24, insert the following:

(D) THE BOARD OF NURSING SHALL APPROVE AN APPLICANT FOR A LICENSE, A CERTIFICATION, RENEWAL OR ANY OTHER AUTHORIZATION ISSUED UNDER THIS ARTICLE TO PRACTICE AS A CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT AS DEFINED BY § 8-6A-01(J) OF THIS ARTICLE THAT COMPLETES THE EDUCATION OR TRAINING REQUIRED TO QUALIFY FOR THE AUTHORIZATION THROUGH A DIGITAL LEARNING PROGRAM.

(I) A CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT AS DEFINED BY § 8-6A-01(J) OF THIS ARTICLE MAY COMPLETE A DIGITAL LEARNING PROGRAM IN CONSULTATION WITH THE BOARD OF NURSING.

(II) THE DIGITAL LEARNING PROGRAM MUST CONSIST OF A MINIMUM OF 8 HOURS OF EDUCATION AND MUST INCLUDE TRAINING IN THE FOLLOWING CONTENT AREAS:

- (a) **RESIDENTS' RIGHTS;**
- (b) **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESIDENTS' PERSONAL INFORMATION AND MEDICAL RECORDS;**
- (c) **CONTROL OF CONTAGIOUS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES;**
- (d) **EMERGENCY RESPONSE MEASURES;**
- (e) **ASSISTANCE WITH ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING;**
- (f) **MEASURING VITAL SIGNS;**
- (g) **SKIN CARE AND PRESSURE SORES PREVENTION;**
- (h) **PORTABLE OXYGEN USE AND SAFETY;**
- (i) **NUTRITION AND HYDRATION; AND**
- (j) **DEMENTIA CARE**

(E) AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS BEEN PRACTICING AS A CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT AS DEFINED BY § 8-6A-01(J) OF THIS ARTICLE THAT IS IN GOOD STANDING WITH THE BOARD OF NURSING AND HAS BEEN PRACTICING FOR AT LEAST 180 DAYS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC SHALL:

- (1) **BE PERMITTED TO CONTINUE TO PRACTICE AS A CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT, AND**
- (2) **BE PERMITTED TO SEEK CERTIFICATION AS A GERIATRIC NURSING ASSISTANT UNDER SUBSECTION (F).**

(F) IN ORDER TO PERFORM THE DUTIES OF A GERIATRIC NURSING ASSISTANT, A CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT AS DEFINED BY § 8-6A-01(J) OF THIS ARTICLE MUST SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR GERIATRIC NURSING ASSISTANT MANDATED UNDER THE REGULATIONS OF THE BOARD OF NURSING.