

February 11, 2022  
From: Erika Estefania Lopez Molina  
1009 Chillum Rd, #314, MD, 20782  
[eel49857@marymount.edu](mailto:eel49857@marymount.edu)/ 202-520-5213

Testimony for HB-0533 Occupations and Professions - Licenses, Certificates, and Registration - Immigrants

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Dear Chair C.T. Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

I have been a resident of District 2, Prince George's County for the past two years. I am currently a second-year nursing student at Marymount University in Virginia, 21 years old, and I am currently in an immigration process called Special Immigrant Juvenile Status to become a legal resident of the U.S.

My love for nursing began here in the U.S. when I was just 12 years old, spoke no English and was being cared for by American nurses in the ER at Children's Hospital due to head trauma from a car crash, I had no family members to console me but kind nurses. I am passionate about my education because I have faced many hurdles to be at a college in the U.S. as an undocumented immigrant.

I know that due to my life experiences and developed maturity from a young age translating for my single mother and working since the age of 15. That I can make an impact in my community, this amazing country, and hopefully worldwide in developing countries.

Thus, it doesn't matter if I must commute for a total of four hours to and from university. It doesn't matter if I am a first-generation student trying to make the best of my time and life. Nonetheless, my education and the sacrifices might go to waste if my immigration process is not accepted, or if this bill doesn't go to pass, and thousands of my peers just like me will be wasted talents, and potentials that the United States could benefit from and be proud of. Some of my professional and personal goals are to complete my BSN with a minor in public health, and further my education with a PhD in Health Policy. All in all, with that education and preparation I know I will have the right knowledge and tools to help advocate, care for, and educate other health professionals on how to serve the marginalized and underserved populations inside the U.S. such as the (undocumented/homeless/ and uninsured); and outside the U.S. (developing countries). I also hope to gain connections and mentors on how I can reach my goals, how to connect with sponsors and donors to fund clinics and hospitals in developing countries, and much more.

Thus, I urge you all to analyze my words along with the other supporting letters and pass this bill into existence. Maryland will be the among the first leading states<sup>1</sup>, to provide professional licenses to DACA recipients, and undocumented immigrants, something to be proud of because you will be doing a tremendous service to the U.S., to Maryland due to worker shortages in many emergency sectors. "According to the Maryland Department of Legislative Services, staffing is down 13.8% in public safety, down 12.6% in the executive branch and down 10% in transportation".<sup>2</sup> Also the health sector specifically nurses are in shortage and demand in Maryland, "The state's hospitals have 3,900 nursing vacancies, the Maryland Hospital Association announced. . . .the association said the "staggering workforce shortage" is limiting hospitals' "capacity to meet the needs of all Maryland residents."<sup>3</sup> I respectfully urge the committee to pass HBO533 and give it a favorable report.

Respectfully,

Erika Molina

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ncsl.org/research/immigration/professional-and-occupational-licenses-for-immigrants.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wbaltv.com/article/maryland-state-government-worker-shortage/38849120#>

<sup>3</sup> <https://wtop.com/maryland/2022/02/amid-staggering-nursing-shortage-md-lawmakers-target-price-gouging-concerns/#:~:text=The%20state's%20hospitals%20have%203%2C900,needs%20of%20all%20Maryland%20residents.%E2%80%9D>