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Joint Audit Committee
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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SB899: Health Occupations Boards - Authority Over Staffing and Infrastructure Operations

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Tuesday, February 22, 2022 | 1pm

Our 20 Health Occupations Boards are composed of medical professionals, many of whom are practicing clinicians with no time to handle administrative duties. This causes the Boards to fall behind on their workload.

The Board of Nursing has the largest number of open Customer Service Inquiries-- 1,186. According to a [recent WBAL news article](#), "On some mornings, the lines at the Maryland Board of Nursing's office in northwest Baltimore stretches around the side of the building with 100 or more people."

A number of constituents have contacted my office, complaining about delays in getting their nursing license. No one should have to ask their legislators to contact the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) in order to finally obtain their earned credentials.

As amended, [SB899](#) (cross-filed with Del. Krebs) would take over administrative operations from the Boards and give these responsibilities to MDH in order to reduce their workload. This would include overseeing human resources, information technology, procurement, Budget and Management resources, office space, telecommunications, and audit compliance.

Shifting these tasks to MDH (which has the staff and financial capability to handle the work) would allow Boards to focus on more important matters in a timely fashion, including issuing licenses; collecting fees; investigating complaints; and conducting disciplinary action.

In addition to shifting the administrative tasks, the amended version of this bill will give the Secretary of Health the authority to appoint each Executive Director-- but only with advice and consent of the respective Board. It will also allow the Secretary to set the compensation of Board staff in consultation with the Secretary of Budget and Management. This is in an effort to ensure that the boards are held accountable for their deliverables.

By relieving Board staff of their administrative duties and shifting the burden to MDH, service for our constituents will improve.

I urge a favorable report on SB899.