



Testimony on SB82
Certified Nursing Assistants - Licensing Requirements
Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee:

My name is Ricarra Jones, and I am the Political Director of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. We are the largest healthcare workers union in the nation – representing 10,000 healthcare workers in long-term care facilities and hospitals across Maryland. Our union supports SB82: Certified Nursing Assistants - Licensing Requirements and urges the Committee to issue a favorable report.

As a union that specifically represent certified nursing assistants, geriatric nursing assistant, and other healthcare workers, we find it necessary that the State passes this bill to create a program to assist these workers in learning more skills and an easier avenue to obtain licenses. By doing so, the State will provide better quality care for more patients by creating a larger healthcare workforce to be prepared to handle various challenges that may arise on the worksite. Due to current complaints from our members, including workplace safety, violence and drug occurrences, and behavioral health issues with patients, this bill offers training for this ongoing problem that many healthcare workers face.

In a time where Maryland is also facing an ever-increasing short-staffing crisis due to COVID, it is imperative that the Maryland Department of Health provides this training to provide an avenue where healthcare workers can learn the skills of other healthcare workers. This would provide the necessary knowledge, techniques and experiences to be able to tackle spontaneous and volatile medical situations stemming from nursing home residents. In creating these trainings, it will allow the Board of Nursing to expedite applications and grant more certifications to more healthcare workers in nursing home.

Given the current nursing home climate in the state of Maryland today, particularly concerning the need for more nursing home workers to become better skilled and certified in various fields, we at 1199SEIU ask this Committee to give a favorable report to SB82.

Respectfully,

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