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Maryland Chapter
AMERICAN COLLEGE OF
EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS



MARYLAND ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS



MID-ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

TO: The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
Members, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
The Honorable Melony Griffith

FROM: J. Steven Wise
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Danna L. Kauffman
Christine K. Krone

DATE: February 17, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 626 – *Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians and Physician Assistants – Alterations*

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society, the Maryland Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians, the Maryland Academy of Family Physicians, and the Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers, we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 626.

Senate Bill 626 implements two recommendations from the Workgroup on the Maryland Loan Assistance and Repayment Program (MLARP) for Physicians and Physician Assistants, which provides loan repayment aid to eligible physicians and physician assistants (PAs) who work in underserved areas of the State for 2 years. The Workgroup was created by Senate Bill 501 of 2020 and was tasked with examining ways to improve MLARP. The Workgroup issued its Final Report in December of 2021, which included numerous recommendations, some of which related to funding, some that can be implemented without statutory change, and the two recommendations addressed by Senate Bill 626.

The first change is making the statute clear that part-time physicians and PAs are eligible for pro-rated loan assistance. The hours spent caring for patients by part-time providers are no less important than those spent by full-time providers, so it is appropriate that part-time providers be made eligible for MLARP.

Second, the bill establishes a permanent Advisory Council which is comprised of the same stakeholders involved in the Workgroup. The Advisory Council's purpose is set forth as well, which includes guiding MLARP so that it maximizes the funds available to the program and remains competitive with other states' loan assistance programs.

MLARP is a powerful tool at the State's disposal to ensure patient access to physicians in every part of Maryland, and we ask that the Committee adopt Senate Bill 626 to implement these needed changes.

For more information call:

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