

MedChi

The Maryland State Medical Society

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

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

DATE: February 22, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 696 – *Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment for Nurses and Nursing Workers – Program Establishment and Funding*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **supports** Senate Bill 696.

This legislation will establish a loan assistance program for nurses and nursing workers, very similar to what currently exists in a separate program for physicians and physician assistants. In return for working in primary care in underserved areas of the State, nurses and nursing workers would be eligible for loan assistance.

The need for more primary care health professionals is unmistakable, and the COVID pandemic has made this even more clear. In addition, educational debt is a serious concern for health care workers, especially those who choose to pursue advanced degrees and training. Coupled with the fact that primary care is one of, if not, the lowest paying specialty in health care, incentives like loan assistance are critical.

MedChi has worked very hard to get the loan assistance program for physicians and physician's assistants on solid footing and is beginning to see the benefits of those efforts. We believe that establishing this program for nurses and nursing workers will produce the same results over time.

For these reasons, we ask that the Committee support Senate Bill 696.

For more information call:

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