



Board of Nursing

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

February 10, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: SB 440 – Commission to Study the Healthcare Workforce Crisis in Maryland – Letter of Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Pinsky and Committee Members:

The Maryland Board of Nursing (the Board) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments to Senate Bill (SB) 440 – Commission to Study the Healthcare Workforce Crisis in Maryland. This bill establishes the Commission to Study the Healthcare Workforce Crisis to examine certain areas related to healthcare workforce shortages in the state. The Commission will examine the extent of the workforce shortage, short-term solutions, future healthcare workforce needs, and the relationship between the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and the Health Occupations Boards (HOBs).

The Board is in favor of the establishment of a Commission that endorses a centralized and coordinated effort to address the healthcare workforce shortage in the state of Maryland. The pandemic has not only worsened the workforce shortage; it has also discouraged frontline staff from continuing and returning to practice. Marylanders are frustrated and fearful of the current environment. The Board believes that an aggregated annual report published by the Commission would quantify how Marylanders truly feel while also informing them of future changes that would be considered. SB 440 would provide an opportunity for subject matter experts to survey the current healthcare environment and discuss long-standing solutions to address obstacles in the field. SB 440 would additionally allow the Board to supply the Commission with nursing data and constituent input for their consideration. The Board believes SB 440 should be prioritized as a strong first step in addressing the workforce shortage holistically.

To further the HOBs' efforts in addressing the workforce shortage and continuing operations, the Board respectfully submits the following language that would allow MDH to supply resources only if there is a need.

On page 4. Line 12. Remove and Instead Add:

**(i) [WHAT AUTHORITY THE SECRETARY SHOULD HAVE OVER THE BOARDS]
ANY BARRIERS THAT THE HEALTH OCCUPATION BOARDS FACE AND
IDENTIFY ANY RESOURCES REQUIRED TO ASSIST THEM; AND**

For the reasons discussed above, the Board of Nursing respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for SB 440.

I hope this information is useful. For more information, please contact Iman Farid, Health Policy Analyst, at (410) 585 – 1536 (iman.farid@maryland.gov) or Rhonda Scott, Deputy Director, at (410) 585 – 1953 (rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Hicks", written in a cursive style.

Gary N. Hicks
Board President

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.