



Testimony - SB696
MD Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Nurses and Nursing Workers Act
Position: Favorable

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Rebecca Boggs-Dooms, and I am a Special Care Nursery Clinician 2 Registered Nurse at University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center. I am writing this testimony to express my support in favor of the passage of this legislation.

As a nurse in a nursery unit in the hospital, the work I do every day is very challenging and very important to me. It took a lot of support from my family and my husband for me to be able to obtain my two-year Associate Degree in Nursing. The cost was over \$9,000. Fortunately for me, I not only had the help of my family I was able to acquire grants to pay for some of my education, or I would not have been able to afford to finish.

However, everyone who is passionate about doing this work is not as fortunate as I was. Four-year colleges and universities charge a premium for the education students receive, which is often four times the price of what I paid for my ADN degree. When Bachelors educated nurses come out of school, they often are saddled with loans they will be paying back for decades, causing them to work more hours and overtime just to make ends meet.

The Magnet Status most hospitals strive to obtain also increases the pressure on nurses to have a BSN degree. If you come out of school with an ADN degree, hospitals generally require you to reach BSN status within a certain time frame, or face losing your job. This again causes many nurses and nursing workers who are already in the workforce financial hardship and causes them to take out loans.

Tuition costs are not the only financial burden nursing students face while working toward a degree. There is the cost of transportation, parking while at your training facility- which in some cases is as much as \$13 a day, and living expenses- all while not yet earning any money.

You should not have to pay through-the-nose to be able to do what you love and provide a vital service to your community. How much can you truly believe these workers are “HEROES” if you bill them this much to be able to serve in a “HEROE” capacity? This act would encourage more members of our community to enter and stay in the nursing field, which is desperately needed to improve some of the shortages we are seeing statewide. It is for this reason this legislation is so necessary, and I why am in support of the passage of SB696.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Boggs-Dooms
Registered Nurse