



**Testimony of Ricarra Jones, Political Director of 1199SEIU on  
SB 518 Career Pathways for Health Care Workers Program Act**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

February 24, 2022

Dear Chairwoman Dolores G. Kelley and Members of the Finance Committee:

1199SEIU Healthcare Workers East is the largest healthcare union in the country with, with over 450,000 members throughout Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Florida and Washington, D.C. **We fully support SB 518.**

SB 518 The Career Pathways for Health Care Workers Program Act would allow the Department of Labor to provide matching grants to eligible employers to pay for certain training programs, specifically those offered by Historically Black Colleges and Universities or community colleges in the State, which are attended by health care workers.

The Career Pathways for Health Care Workers Program Act allows eligible health care workers to attend qualifying job training programs at no cost to them. Eligible employers could receive a matching grant of up to \$50,000.00 per year for payment for these programs on behalf of health care workers.

The funds offered through The Career Pathways for Health Care Workers Program Act are meant to supplement, and not supplant, the amount of funds that an employer would otherwise provide for training programs attended by health care workers in a given year.

Notably, The Career Pathways for Health Care Workers Program Act requires eligible employers to provide a 10% wage increase to any health care worker who completes a qualified job training program for which a matching grant was awarded.

Further, The Career Pathways for Health Care Workers Program Act would provide an influx of students and funding to HBCU's and community colleges in the State which offer training programs to health care workers.

Many health care workers will benefit from The Career Pathways for Health Care Workers Program Act. Costs for education and job training are even more significant in today's economic climate, and are often beyond the reach of many people.

Incentivizing eligible employers to promote qualifying job training programs to health care workers will allow these key service providers to further their careers without the daunting burden of student loans, and without the need to find funds for up-front training program fees.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT SB 518** and ask for a **FAVORABLE** report.

Sincerely,

Ricarra Jones  
Maryland/DC Political Director  
1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers- East  
Cell: [443-844-6513](tel:443-844-6513)