



A Voice for Advanced Practice Clinicians in Maryland



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SUPPORT

SB0548 Local Health Officers - Removal - Grounds and Process

February 24, 2022

The Maryland Academy of Advanced Practice Clinicians (MAAPC) supports Senator Lam et al. SB0548 Local Health Officers - Removal - Grounds and Process.

I am sure you have heard and read testimony sighting the COVID crisis and all that our 24 Health Officers have accomplished in a short and chaotic time.

I would like to add that before there was a pandemic, our health officers worked 365 days a year running clinics and providing information to providers throughout the state.

The suboxone clinics are set up and staffed by our Health Officers and, without their oversight, Marylanders who are trying to stay off heroin and cocaine, redefine their lives, and become contributing members of society would have no choice but to return to the streets for assistance in their cravings. No one wakes up one day and says – I think I will become an addict. No unborn child chooses an addicted mother. No parent wants to lose a child to an overdose.

Health Officers also do much of the testing for sexually transmitted infections, diagnosing the disease early, keeping these individuals out of the emergency room and preventing serious complications such as sterility and even death. Marylanders of all ages need access to healthcare, why deprive them of it for a political reason?

And last, a personal appreciation for Nilesh Kalyanaraman, the Health Officer for Anne Arundel County. My small internal medicine practice in Severna Park has a majority of Medicare patients, many over 90 years old. When vaccines first became available, my office staff were not in the first group to be vaccinated due to their ages and health. But our health clinic was understanding that we wanted to stay open and be available for our patients. They set up immediate appointments for vaccination for all my staff, and that kept up open and healthy throughout the last 2 years.

Should you support this piece of legislation despite its political overtones? Should the health of the people of Maryland be non-partisan and based on performance, not political will?

Surely your answer will be yes.

We urge a favorable report on this bill. If you need further information, please contact me at DrElaineCrainNP@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Dr. Elaine Crain, DNP, MSN, RN, FNP
MAAPC Legislative Co-Chair

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