



Board of Dental Examiners

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

Arpana S. Verma Board Chair – Francis X. McLaughlin, Jr., Executive Director

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February 9, 2022

The Honorable Dolores G. Kelley
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

RE: SB 407-Health Occupations - Health Care Staffing Shortage Emergency - Declaration and Licensing and Practice Requirements (Health Care Heroes Act of 2022) - Letter of Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Kelley and Committee Members:

The Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners (the Board) is submitting this support with amendments to the position paper for SB 407 - Health Occupations - Health Care Staffing Shortage Emergency - Declaration and Licensing and Practice Requirements (Health Care Heroes Act of 2022). The bill empowers the Secretary of Health to declare a health care staffing shortage emergency for up to 180 days if certain health care facilities in the State have insufficient staff which endangers public health. Each health occupations board is required to establish an expedited temporary licensing process for issuing initial licenses, out of state licensees, reactivating inactive licensees, and licensing those who have retired so that they may provide treatment in those facilities subject to the emergency order.

The Board supports the bill since it is in the best interest of all concerned to provide needed care in the event of a staffing emergency. However, the Board is concerned that those dentists and dental hygienists who hold inactive licenses for up to 8 years, or those who have been in retirement for up to 8 years, may have lost essential clinical skills, which would pose a risk to our citizens. Under current regulations the Board requires a candidate for licensure to retake their clinical examination if they have been absent from clinical practice for more than 4 years. Even under emergency conditions, for the protection of Maryland's citizens the Board suggests that the period not be expanded. The Board therefore proposes the following amendments which would result in making the overall plan safer, while still recognizing that an emergency exists.

AMENDMENT 1: Page 4, line 10, strike "8" and substitute "4".

AMENDMENT 2: Page 4, line 21, strike "8" and substitute "4".

I hope that this information is helpful. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact me at 240-498-8159, asverma93@gmail.com, or Dr. Edwin Morris, the Board's Legislative Committee Chair at 410-218-4203. In addition, the Board's Executive Director, Mr. Frank McLaughlin may be reached at 443-878-5253, frank.mclaughlin@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arpana S. Verma', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Arpana S. Verma, D.D.S.
Board President

The opinion of the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners expressed in this support with amendments position paper does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the administration.