



Maryland Community Health System

Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 407 – Health Occupations – Health Care Staffing Shortages Emergency – Declaration and Licensing Practice Requirements (Health Care Heroes Act)

Hearing Date: February 9, 2022

Position: Support with Amendment

Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports with amendment *Senate Bill 407 – Health Occupations – Health Care Staffing Shortage Emergency – Declaration and Licensing Practice Requirements (Health Care Heroes Acts)*.

Maryland Community Health System is a network of federally qualified health centers that focus on serving the underserved and underinsured. During the COVID-19 emergency, our health centers were hit as hard as other health care facilities with staffing shortages. Most of the Secretary’s policies to grant more flexibilities were oriented towards hospitals and long-term care facilities. We understand that those facilities were facing unprecedented crises. Going forward, we would like to ensure workforce shortage policies acknowledge the needs of community health centers.

To that end, we would like to ask for two amendments, and we would be pleased to be part of a stakeholder discussion on any of the other amendments under consideration:

- Add FQHCs to the list of facilities which are included in workforce shortage policies:

On page 2 in line 25, insert “(14) FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS” after “PHARMACY”

- Add the following language regarding credentialing and provider enrollment. We discovered during the pandemic, that it was difficult, if not impossible, to credential a practitioner a part of an insurance panel or enroll the practitioner in Medicaid if the practitioner had a temporary license.

“Section X. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that the Maryland Department of Health and the Maryland Insurance Administration should consult with stakeholders and make recommendations regarding expediting insurance credentialing for public and private insurance, provider enrollment for Medicaid, and controlled dangerous substance registration for practitioners practicing with a temporary license, out-of-state license, or

expedited initial licensure during an Emergency Healthcare Workforce Shortage. The Department of Health and Maryland Insurance Administration should report the workgroup's recommendations to Senate Finance Committee and the House Health and Governmental Operations Committee by December 1, 2022."

Thank you for your consideration of our suggested amendments. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.