

HB 1241 Health Occupations – Nursing Home Administrator - Qualifications

Written Testimony – Ciara J. Lee, Executive Director, Maryland Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators

Good Afternoon Everyone! My name is Ciara Lee and I am the Executive Director of the Maryland Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators. I would first like to thank Chair, Delegate Shane E. Pendergrass; Vice Chair, Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk; and of course, Sponsor Delegate Ariana B. Kelly of the HGO Committee, for this opportunity to provide testimony for House Bill 1241.

Respectfully, I come to you today as the administrative representative of the Board Office, and to emphasize the Board's opposition towards HB 1241 for the following reasons:

- The bill does not adhere to the Board's mission to protect Maryland's citizens;
- It undermines the State regulations set forth to promote and provide quality care for long term care residents; and
- It diminishes the quality and standards of candidates who will one day serve as nursing home administrators in Maryland.

There are two options for individuals who are interested in becoming a licensed nursing home administrator in the state of Maryland; to either apply for the Administrator-In-Training (AIT) program or to apply for Endorsement Licensure (if you currently hold a nursing home administrator license in another state). Under the current qualifications to apply for an Endorsement license, the out-of-state licensee must have at least one year of nursing home administrator of record experience. House bill 1241 would reduce that experience to the following qualifications:

- 9 months of full-time nursing home administration in a nursing home; or
- Have completed 6 months of full-time nursing home administration in a nursing home (not required to be an LNHA); and
- Completed an internship in a nursing home or assisted living (not transparent on internship requirements and or curriculum – ALF education and requirements are not the same as LNHA);
- Hold an active certification issued by the State Board of Nursing and have at least 10 years of experience at a nursing home (applicant can be a CAN/GNA and be eligible to oversee an entire SNF); or
- Have at least 3 years of experience as a Director of Nursing (while Nursing is the biggest and most critical department in SNFs, LNHA's wear many different hats and should be competent and trained to manage all departments including Environmental Services, Social Services, Dietary, Activities, Business Office, Rehabilitation Services, Maintenance, and etc.)

Additionally, there are other states that currently require more than one year of nursing home administrator of record experience for out-of-state applicants to apply for licensure. For instance, New York requires verification of at least 2 years of fulltime experience in the preceding 5 years; while Washington D.C. requires out-of-state license applicants to have at least 3 years of current practice as a nursing home administrator to be eligible for reciprocity and endorsement licensure.

Looking at the data, we currently have 507 active nursing home administrators licensed in the state of Maryland and only 226 licensed skilled nursing home facilities in the state.

Essentially, HB 1241 undermines the current provision put in place to make sure our state licenses qualified individuals to protect our residents. For this reason, the Board is requesting for an unfavorable vote for HB 1241.

Thank you!