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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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Testimony in Support of House Bill 180 - Interstate Medical Licensure Compact – Sunset Extension and Reporting

Good Afternoon Madam Chairwoman, Madam Vice Chairwoman, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about House Bill 180 - Interstate Medical Licensure Compact – Sunset Extension and Reporting

As the Committee is well aware, this body passed a monumental piece of legislation in 2018 that allowed Maryland to opt-into the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, which streamlines and expedites the licensure process to allow physicians to become licensed in multiple states. In 2018 when the legislation was introduced, 22 states were part of the Compact. Now, Maryland is one of 26 states participating, with 4 additional states currently considering the legislation.

As members of the Health and Government Operations Committee, we know one of the major barriers to health-care is the shortage of physicians in our state and throughout our nation. Limiting the time it takes for physicians to get licensed addresses the alarming shortage that has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Without the Compact, Marylanders, especially in rural areas, can lack the necessary care they need, and often face longer wait times and farther travel to see a physician. Additionally, the Compact has helped physicians expand the use of tele-medicine, which has proved an essential component in our health-care industry now more than ever as we have seen.

House Bill 180 in essence would accomplish two things. First, it would extend the impending termination date of the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact that as you know has significantly improved access to care, streamlined the licensing process for physicians, and facilitated the practice of tele-health. In addition, this legislation would expand upon the annual report the State Board of Physicians is required to submit under § 14-205.1 of the Health Occupations Article to allow for more transparency and accountability in making sure the Compact is accomplishing what it was intended to do.

I respectfully request for a favorable report on House Bill 180.