



Maryland Community Health System

Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill Number: HB 1208 - Health Occupations - Health Care Workforce Expansion

Hearing Date: March 3, 2022

Position: Support

Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *House Bill 1208 – Health Occupations Workforce Expansion*. The bill provides a framework for building the pipeline of nursing and nursing support staff by:

- Expanding the number of nurse preceptors for nursing students through a tax credit program;
- Establishing an externship program for nursing students to support their educational experience and provide clinical support to health facilities and programs; and
- Study utilizing apprenticeship programs under the Department of Labor to support the expansion of community health workers, nursing support staff, and other support personnel essential to making the care team function.

MCHS is a network of federally qualified health centers focused on providing somatic, behavioral, and dental health services to underserved communities. Our health centers have always been challenged to find a sufficient number of nursing and nursing support staff, but it has reached a crises level with the pandemic. We strongly support this legislation because it will alleviate these shortages for us as well as for other health care providers.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.