



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL AFL-CIO

7 School Street • Annapolis, Maryland 21401-2096

Office. (410) 269-1940 • Fax (410) 280-2956

President

Donna S. Edwards

Secretary-Treasurer

Gerald W. Jackson

HB 747 – Maryland Health Care Commission – Nursing Homes - Audit House Health and Government Operations Committee February 24, 2022

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 747 – Maryland Health Care Commission – Nursing Homes - Audit. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 340,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

As Maryland continues to age, our nursing homes will become more of a part of our lives. We currently do not have a good method of long-term planning for the health care needs of the elderly. Unlike hospitals, that provide detailed and timely information to policy makers on a regular basis, nursing homes only give detailed cost reports to Medicare and Medicaid. Without a detailed financial analysis of Maryland's nursing homes and their nearly 30,000 beds, decision-makers cannot make informed choices about long-term care needs and policies to support them.

Additionally, PHI projects the need for a 40% increase in direct care staff to address the needs of our state's aging population, while only expecting a 17% increase in staffing.¹ The documented shortages at Maryland's nursing homes will continue to be a problem that will only increase over time if we do not address it.

HB 747 mandates annual audits of Maryland's nursing homes, focusing primarily on cost trends, labor issues, and financial performance. Audits are good practice for any industry, but for something as important as elder care, it is imperative that policymakers know what is going on, with accurate and timely data from our nursing homes. We owe it to the patients and the workers in our nursing homes, to be fully informed and have the data necessary to make informed decisions on behalf of the most vulnerable among us, and those who work every day to take care of them. For these reasons **we ask for a favorable report on HB 747.**

¹ <https://phinational.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/DSWorkers-Maryland-2018-PHI.pdf>