



Testimony on SB111
Occupational Licenses or Certificates
Pre-application Determinations - Criminal Convictions
Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

My name is Ricarra Jones, and I am the Political Director of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. We are the largest healthcare workers union in the nation – representing 10,000 healthcare workers in long-term care facilities and hospitals across Maryland. Our union supports SB111: Occupational Licenses or Certificates Pre-application Determinations - Criminal Convictions and urges the Committee to issue a favorable report.

Our criminal justice system has a long history of determining the future of many Maryland residents based on crimes that have been both heinous and minor. For these same Marylanders who have fulfilled their criminal obligation to the State, an avenue to continue being productive citizens of society should always be made available. For this reason, we support this bill to establish a process by which the State examines the potential for individuals who may have had a criminal conviction to still be allowed to obtain an occupational license or certificate.

By passing this bill, it will allow the State and communities to benefit in various ways. For the State, Maryland would be able to increase its workforce, allowing more revenue to be directed to current and failing state programs. For communities across Maryland, this gives individuals the opportunity to pursue their career goals, and the ability to provide for themselves and their families.

For 1199 members, this bill is necessary to increase back-to-work opportunities and by consequence, allow the healthcare workforce to expand. In a time when healthcare workers and workers in other pivotal industries are leaving their jobs, passing this bill would allow the State to better sustain essential public and private workforces. Given the exponential benefits this bill would create for Maryland's workforce and families, we urge a favorable report from the Committee on SB111.

Respectfully,

Ricarra Jones
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