



Maryland
Hospital Association

March 28, 2023

To: The Honorable C.T. Wilson, Chair, House Economic Matters Committee

Re: Letter of Support As Amended - Senate Bill 104 - Labor and Employment - Apprenticeships and Representation on the Apprenticeship and Training Council

Dear Chair Wilson:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of Senate Bill 104 as amended.

Maryland hospitals are facing the most critical staffing shortage in recent memory. A 2022 [GlobalData](#) report estimates a statewide shortage of 5,000 full-time registered nurses and 4,000 licensed practical nurses. Without intervention, shortages could double or even triple by 2035. MHA's [2022 State of Maryland's Health Care Workforce report](#) outlines a roadmap to ensure Maryland has the health care workforce it needs now and into the future.

As amended, SB 104 would require the Commission to identify the largest occupational sectors with current or projected skill shortages, including health care; explore degree apprenticeships in fields requiring degrees, including health care; engage employer and labor communities to identify needs for registered apprenticeship career pathways; examine registered apprenticeships and how to scale them; identify funding opportunities to expand registered apprenticeship pathways; and make recommendations, which include specific goals by occupation. This work aligns with the recommendations of MHA's Task Force on Maryland's Future Health Workforce to create pathways for careers in high demand health care roles.

Hospital data show high vacancy rates for licensed practical nurses, respiratory therapists, registered nurses, and surgical technicians. One in five nursing assistant positions are vacant.¹ As the [Maryland Department of Labor's Healthcare Apprenticeship Workgroup](#) explored during the interim, there are opportunities to expand apprenticeships in health care. MHA looks forward to engaging with the Commission and other stakeholders to remove barriers for Marylanders interested in working in health care so we can expand and grow a diverse and talented workforce to support the state's current and future needs.

For these reasons, we ask for a *favorable* report on SB 104 as amended.

For more information, please contact:
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¹ MHA Workforce Survey – January 2023