



## TESTIMONY FOR HB0454

### Health Occupations - Licenses, Certificates, and Registrations - Immigrants

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Lopez

**Committee:** Health and Government Operations

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0454 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state with well over 30,000 members.

Maryland is a state that is very welcoming to immigrants, who help support our economy and ensure that we have a wealth of diversity in our workforce. Anyone who is a resident of the state and is working, is paying into our tax base. In the case of immigrants who have not attained citizenship, they are often not getting the benefit of some of the taxes they pay since they are not eligible for a variety of programs. For those people who are residents but not citizens, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that we don't put up barriers to their ability to become employed.

Currently, there are many jobs in Maryland that require a license and the laws regarding who can get a license clearly preclude immigrants because a Social Security Number is required. This means that state residents, who would otherwise be able to get a license, be employed, and pay taxes, are not eligible.

This legislation changes the applicable law so that the Health Occupations Board cannot deny a license, certification or registration to an immigrant as long as they meet the requirements and to allow a Taxpayer Identification Number in lieu of a Social Security Number on all the paperwork.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.