



Committee: Finance

Bill: SB 673/674 Physician Assistant Modernization Act / Physician Assistant Parity Act

Position: SUPPORT (FAVORABLE)

3/13/23

Timothy Sparta MS, PA-C

Members of the Senate,

My name is Timothy Sparta and I have been a practicing PA in the state of Maryland for the past 13 years. Since my graduation from the Rutgers' Physician Assistant Program located in Piscataway, NJ in 2010, I have provided primary care and emergency care to patients in rural healthcare settings throughout the Eastern Shore of Maryland. I work along Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, other Physician Assistants and many other healthcare professionals to provide patients with a team-based model of healthcare. Patients living in rural regions of Maryland deserve the same healthcare as patients living in suburban and urban regions.

I have also been involved in the development of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore Physician Assistant Program, one of only 6 HBCU PA Programs throughout the country. I currently practice adult internal medicine and assist with the clinical education of the UMES PA students. We recently graduated our first cohort of 16 students and at least 6 of them have obtained employment on the eastern shore. These students will not only help alleviate the healthcare professional shortage throughout the state, but they are also trained to provide primary care to our most underserved patient populations in Maryland.

This past year, I was elected as the President of the Maryland Academy of Physician Assistants. Serving as the President of MdAPA, I have had the chance to attend several statewide meetings discussing the impact of healthcare professional shortages on patients. It is clear that something needs to be done now to ensure that all Marylanders have access to healthcare for decades to come. As lawmakers and healthcare providers, we need to work together to provide answers to the current healthcare professional shortage. Physician Assistants are fully capable to assist with this dilemma and help alleviate the demand being placed on the healthcare system at this point of time.

SB 673/674 provides solutions at the practice level which will allow PAs in Maryland to practice medicine commensurate with our level of education and experience. As PAs, we truly respect our relationship with our physician colleagues and understand the importance of collaborating with a variety of healthcare professionals from all specialties to ensure patients receive the best care. Many of the surrounding states have already adopted regulations similar to those proposed in SB 673/674. Let us do what is right for our patients and make progress to eliminate the healthcare gaps we are currently experiencing. In closing, I would like to thank the members of the Senate for this opportunity to highlight our profession and would strongly encourage your support of SB 673/674.