

Hearing Date: March 14, 2023

Committee: Finance

Bill: [SB 0674 – Physician Assistants - Parity With Other Health Care Practitioners \(Physician Assistant Parity Act of 2023\)](#)

Position: SUPPORT (FAV)

This is in **Support of SB 0674- PA Parity Act of 2023.**

Good Afternoon Senators,

I am writing to you today for two reasons:

1. As a concerned Maryland voter, and,
2. As a dedicated Physician Assistant (PA-C) in support of Both Maryland SB 673 (HB 727), "The Physician Assistant Modernization Act", and Maryland SB 674 (HB 722), "The Physician Assistant Parity Act".

I had the wonderful opportunity to testify before the Maryland House Health and Government Operations Committee March 6, 2023, and I am looking forward to testifying before the Maryland Senate Finance Committee tomorrow March 14, 2023.

The several reasons I support these Bills are:

- They will allow PAs to provide better access to care for underserved populations in their own "neighborhoods".
- The Bills will allow PAs in Maryland to practice at the height of their skill and training levels, for the benefit of their communities.
- They will allow PAs to form more effective collaborative relationships with their Supervising Physicians.
- The Bills will allow PAs in Maryland to provide signatures for their patients on occupational and certain other forms (State and Federal), in order for patients to have better continuity of care. Which would limit patients having to seek redundant signatures.
- They will facilitate PAs being listed as "Medical Professionals". And, since PAs have always been trained by Physicians in the "Medical Model", "Medical Professional" is the best term.
- The Bills will provide parity with other medical providers, which will assist patients in maintaining confidence in their primary care PAs.
- Lastly, they will greatly reduce the administrative burden for medical practices to hire Physician Assistants for service to the citizens of Maryland.

Additional support I voiced this week at the House H, G, & O Committee, concerned requesting support for "Collaboration" agreements for PAs, enhancing the ability for PAs to practice in medically underserved areas (by reducing the administrative burden for State and Federal Loan Repayment clinics to hire PAs), and enhancing the ability of mental health PAs like me to practice in this area of vital need for the citizens of Maryland.

Consistent with my career description below, I have over 4000 clinical practice hours of active-duty mental health experience, over 1000 hours of live CME in behavioral health, and more than 300 hours of didactic and clinical instruction in Psychiatry during PA Professional School. Current Maryland regulations would not also allow me to provide mental health services to primary care medical patients.

Beneficial goals of these currently proposed Bills would be to allow PAs to help their clients by practicing at the safest and highest levels of their education, training, and experience.

Regrettably, Maryland's current PA practice laws are lagging behind those of Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, and the District of Columbia.

I am a recently retired active-duty Physician Assistant, US Public Health Service, and I am seeking employment in Maryland.

I am currently seeking a local position, where I can practice at the height of my skill level.

My wife, family, and I have lived in Edgewater for approximately the last 8 years.

I have spent my PA-C working life caring for underserved populations and working in the following settings:

prisons, rural areas (primary care, urgent care, school-based health, and geriatrics), Native American Reservations (primary care and emergent care), Dept. of Homeland Security, and Military Mental Health Inpatients (traumatic brain injuries, co-occurring mental health, and addiction medicine).

Again, I sincerely appreciate your time and support of these important PA Practice Bills, which will greatly benefit the citizens of Maryland.

Very truly yours,

Bob

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