

**Hearing Date:** March 14, 2023

**Committee:** Finance

**Bill:** [SB674 – Parity With Other Health Care Practitioners \(Physician Assistant Parity Act of 2023\)](#)

**Position:** SUPPORT (Favorable)

This is a letter in **Support of SB 674- PA Modernization Act.**

I recently accepted the position as Department Chair and Program Director of the Frostburg State University Physician Assistant (PA) Program. I started in December 2023, and I live and work in Hagerstown. My understanding is the original justification for the program was the State of Maryland wanted a PA Program in Western Maryland to address the prominent healthcare disparities that plague the western counties in the state. The program is about to graduate the 3<sup>rd</sup> class of 25 students in May. Graduates are very sensitive to equity issues in general related to the diversity, equity, and inclusion issues embedded into modern curriculum. Additionally, our graduates have the ability to practice in Virginia, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, by driving no more than 20 minutes from campus. This generation is very savvy at evaluating state laws related to PA practice and it is part of the curriculum as well.

In essence, this bill brings PA practice into alignment with our advanced practice nursing colleagues. Modern PA curriculum includes didactic and clinical instruction for emergent situations outlined in this bill such as issues related to the guardianship of disabled persons, admission of individuals to mental health facilities, the Emergency and Allergy Treatment Program, the Attendant Care Program, and petitions for extreme risk protective orders. We are equally qualified to our advanced practice nursing colleagues to provide this care and facilitate access to this care. Removing this antiquated barrier will be beneficial to the Western Maryland residents that our graduates care for as evidenced by a letter of support for this bill by Frostburg State University.

The Frostburg State University PA Program appreciates the fiscal support provided to the program, students, and graduates, and I, as a private citizen ask the Senate to do the equitable thing and pass this bill out of committee for a vote on the floor as a sign of support for Western Maryland residents, PA graduates who practice here, and as a show of good faith to encourage our future graduates to stay and practice in the state.

Sincerely,

Todd

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