

TESTIMONY

Bill: SB 439- Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Compact

Position: OPPOSED (UNFAV)

Committees: Senate Finance

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am a nurse practitioner living in Anne Arundel County and I recently retired from a specialty practice on the Eastern Shore. I am a member of the Maryland Medical Reserve Corp and during the pandemic I assisted with the Covid 19 response. I am a member of the NPAM legislative committee and I am speaking today in opposition of **SB 439 – Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Compact**.

We are well aware of the serious nursing workforce shortages in Maryland. This bill in its current form is NOT a viable solution to the problem. In fact, the language would create unnecessary barriers to APRNs entering practice after graduation. As you have heard from my colleagues, the practice hours requirement is unnecessary and a step backward for nurse practitioners' entry into practice in Maryland.

Nurse practitioners face the challenges of the healthcare workforce shortages on a daily basis. We as providers see first hand the detrimental effects lack of timely access to care has on the health of the citizens and communities we serve. NPAM is committed to finding realistic solutions to the workforce issues and have provided our ideas as an attachment to our written testimony. First among these ideas is improving the efficiency of the Maryland Board of Nursing which this body has already begun to address. We applaud your leadership in this regard and thank you for your efforts.

Another significant flaw in the bill language is the absence of APRN representation on the Interstate Commission of APRN Compact Administrators. This translates to no APRN seat at the table when it comes to issues related to APRN practice. It is essential that APRNs be included on the Commission as practice experts and to support the APRN workforce.

NPAM has worked in good faith with the proponents of this bill in Maryland but have been unable to reach consensus. We have also communicated clearly and consistently for years with the National Council State Boards of Nursing, the authors of the Compact, and they have been unresponsive to our concerns. We have offered our assistance in drafting common sense language to both the Maryland stakeholders and to the National Council thus far to no avail. We remain hopeful that a fourth iteration of the Compact can be drafted to address the significant flaws we have outlined so that NPAM can adopt a support position. We are confident other states in opposition to the current Compact language would reconsider their positions as well.

License uniformity and portability across state lines for in-person and telehealth care is one feasible strategy to tackle the workforce shortages and improve access to affordable, quality healthcare in Maryland. I support an APRN Compact but not THIS Compact.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify and would be glad to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

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