Support of: House Bill 278 Health Occupations – Clinical Nurse Specialists - Prescribing

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk, Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

On behalf of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, I am writing to express our support for House Bill 278, a bill to provide for prescriptive authority for the advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) role of clinical nurse specialist (CNS). As an independent, not-for-profit organization representing the board of nursing from each state, including Maryland, and author along with 40 other organizations of the 2008 Consensus Model for APRN Regulation (Consensus Model), we are supportive of the enactment of House Bill 278 to further align Maryland with the national standards for practice and regulation of the CNS role.

Clinical Nurse Specialists are one of four APRN roles and are expert clinicians who are educated and trained to diagnose and treat illness, manage disease, and prevent illness and risk behaviors among individuals, groups and communities. Clinical nurse specialists are educated at a master's level or higher in their role and population foci, have completed courses in advanced pharmacology, advanced physiology, and advanced physical assessment, and obtain and maintain national certification. This is identical to those standards met by their clinical nurse practitioner colleagues in Maryland who are valued and safe prescribers.

Decades of research demonstrate APRNs are safe practitioners with quality patient outcomes. Evidence of this safe and quality care can be witnessed today across Maryland, where patients enjoy safe and independent care provided by all four APRN roles. Granting prescriptive authority for CNS' will increase access to care, allow CNS' to practice to the full extent of their education and certification, all while maintaining safe practice. Thank you for your time.

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