

**Hearing Date:** March 6, 2023

**Committee:** Health and Government Operations

**Bill:** [HB727- Physician Assistants – Revisions \(Physician Assistant Modernization Act of 2023\)](#)

**Position:** SUPPORT (Favorable)

This is a letter in **Support of HB 727- PA Modernization Act of 2023**. I am a lead Physician Assistant (PA) in the Emergency Department at a nonprofit MedStar Hospital in Baltimore City, which is one of seven Maryland based emergency departments in the MedStar Health system. Even before the COVID pandemic, rising hospitalization rates and staffing shortages would often combine to create unsafe environments for patients seeking emergency care; over time this has only worsened. As part of this large health system, we have worked hard to try to distribute our highly trained and capable staff to deploy to those facilities that were experiencing critical shortages.

Unfortunately, PAs have been challenged to respond, despite being more than willing. This is due to the administrative burden of requiring separate delegation agreements for each hospital, a process that requires significant time and money to pursue, and something that no other healthcare provider encounters. With the backing of our system, we have worked to cross-credential physicians at each hospital, thus allowing any PAs that are part of their delegation agreement to also work at those same facilities. While this is a work around, if that physician leaves the system- especially if it happens without sufficient notice- then those PAs have to stop working until a new delegation agreement is approved by the state, a process that has been known to take upwards of several months due to the volume of applications the Board of Physicians faces.

By supporting SB673, PAs will enter into collaborative agreements with the practice instead of individual providers. This will allow more flexibility to respond to staffing challenges within the system, as well as to avoid the potential hurdle having PAs stop practice if a single physician leaves the organization. While this example may be specific to MedStar Health, it is faced across the state by every organization with more than one location. For that reason, I urge you to **support Bill HB722** to prevent unnecessary paperwork and fees, and more easily allow PAs to respond to the needs of the healthcare system at large.

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