



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

February 16, 2023

House Bill 196: Health Occupations - Service Members, Veterans, and Military Spouses - Temporary Licensure,
Certification, Registration, and Permitting
Written Testimony Only

POSITION: Favorable

On behalf of the members of the Health Facilities Association of Maryland (HFAM), we appreciate the opportunity to express our support for House Bill 196. HFAM represents skilled nursing centers and assisted living communities in Maryland, as well as associate businesses that offer products and services to healthcare providers. Our members provide services and employ individuals in nearly every jurisdiction of the state.

House Bill 196 requires health occupations boards to issue an expedited temporary license, certificate, registration, or permit to a service member, veteran, or military spouse who meets certain requirements; requires each health occupations board to include a check-off box prominently on each license, certification, or registration application form to indicate whether the individual is a service member, veteran, or military spouse; and requires the Maryland Department of Health to publish prominently certain information on its website.

HFAM has a long commitment to advocating for and supporting public policies that recognize the value that service members, veterans, and military spouses bring to the civilian workforce and House Bill 196 could not come at a more critical time.

In Maryland and throughout the country, we are facing a shortage of healthcare workers across settings, with particularly fewer people working in skilled nursing and rehabilitation centers. Workforce recruitment and retention was a challenge before the pandemic and it has only grown more challenging. Tens of thousands of healthcare workers in Maryland have left the field since the start of the pandemic. Licensed healthcare professionals are scarce and all healthcare settings are competing for employees from the same labor pool. Veterans and their partners have the potential to be a tremendous resource in the healthcare workforce crisis we currently face.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report from the Committee on House Bill 196.

Submitted by:

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