



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

March 30, 2023

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
6 Bladen St. Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 871 - Social Workers- Sunset Extension, Notification of Complete Application, and Workgroup on Social Worker Examination Requirements for Licensure

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of information for Senate Bill (SB) 871 - Social Workers- Sunset Extension, Notification of Complete Application, and Workgroup on Social Worker Examination Requirements for Licensure. As amended, SB 871 establishes a workgroup on Social Worker Examination Requirements for Licensure, extends the sunset date of the State Board of Social Work Examiners to July 1, 2025, and requires the Board, within certain time periods, to notify an applicant of whether the application is complete.

This bill, as amended, aligns with MDH's current approach to sunset extensions for Health Occupations Boards. A sunset evaluation and extension is a tool to review existing laws and regulations governing the State's occupational and professional Boards. These reviews facilitate the careful consideration of the Board's purpose and operations, including ensuring that licensing is protecting public health and safety and that licensing is not overly broad or burdensome.¹ Of note, Chapter 511 of the Acts of 2019 eliminated Maryland's automatic 10 year sunset evaluations that were conducted by the Department of Legislative Services prior to extensions.² In its place, sunset evaluations are now conducted only when directed by certain entities.

A more thorough evaluation of the Health Occupations Boards is needed at this time to assess ongoing concerns related to licensure, technology, and administrative functions. A two (2) year sunset extension allows ample time for MDH and the Boards to examine these functions and return to the General Assembly with an update.

If you have any questions please contact Megan Peters, Acting Director, Office of Governmental Affairs, at megan.peters@maryland.gov or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary

¹ <https://www.ncsl.org/labor-and-employment/sunset-and-sunrise>

² <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/sb0640?ys=2019RS>