



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

February 22, 2023

Honorable Joseline Pena-Melnyk
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

HB 454 – Health Occupations – Licenses, Certificates, and Registrations - Immigrants - **Request for Favorable Report**

Dear Chairwoman Pena-Melnyk and Honorable Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee

On behalf of the Maryland Military Coalition and as its Communication Director, I am requesting your **favorable report** on HB 454. For the record, my name is CAPTAIN Lynn Nash. I am a retired nurse, who completed over 30 years of active-duty service in both the Army and the U.S. Public Health Service. I am well acquainted with the issue.

This bill prohibits a health occupations board from denying a license, certification, or registration to an immigrant if the individual meets the requirements. For those unaware, the requirements for licensure are extensive. The applicant must:

- [Meet the educational requirements](#)
- [Complete a foreign-educated nurses \(FEN\) course](#)
- [Take and pass an English language proficiency test, if mandated](#)
- [Pass the state's National Council Licensing Examination-Registered Nurse \(NCLEX – RN\)](#)
- [Obtain credential evaluation](#)
- [Find a nursing recruiting agency or US-based employer](#)
- [Apply and obtain an RN immigrant visa/green card](#)

These requirements are all encompassing to ensure that the applicant has the competencies needed to practice safely. As such, this legislation makes sense, especially in light of the current shortage of providers here in the state.

Currently, the U.S. Armed Forces are experiencing significant shortages. According to the [Defense Health Agency](#), these shortages extend to clinical nurses, potentiating a degradation in the Service's ability to provide what has always been state-of-the-art-care to service members and their families.

Page 2

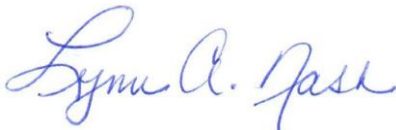
HB 454 – Health Occupations – Licenses, Certificates, and Registrations - Immigrants -**FAVORABLE**
February 22, 2023

Recruiting and retention considerations often include what benefits service members and their families will receive in exchange for the rigors of active duty on both the service member AND the family. Healthcare is at the top of the list. Passage of this bill offers another possible infusion of candidates seeking to serve in the U.S. Armed Services as well as the U.S. Public Health Service, each of which require an active U.S. nursing license to sign on.

The Maryland Military Coalition, is a **voluntary**, non-partisan **organization representing 19 veteran service organizations**, who, in turn, serve over 150,000 Maryland uniformed services men, women and their families. The Coalition ***strongly supports*** House Bill 454 – Health Occupations – Licenses, Certificates, and Registrations - Immigrants and asks for your ***favorable report***.

Thank you to Delegate Lopez for sponsoring this important legislation.

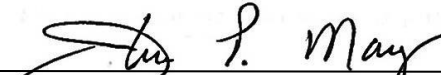
Respectfully,




Lynn A. Nash, PhD, RN, PHCNS-BC, FAAN
CAPT (R), U.S. Public Health Service
Communications Director

Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition


Air Force Sergeants Association

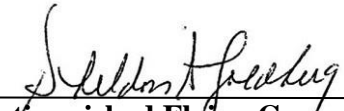

American Military Society



American Minority Veterans Research Project


Association of the United States Navy



Commissioned Officers Association of the
US Public Health Service


Disabled American Veterans

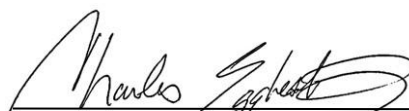

Distinguished Flying Cross Association


Fleet Reserve Association


Jewish War Veterans of the USA


Maryland Air National Guard Retirees'
Association


Military Officers Association of America



Military Order of the Purple Heart


Montford Point Marines of America


National Association for Black Veterans


Naval Enlisted Reserve Association


NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers


Reserve Organization of America


Society of Military Widows


Veterans of Foreign Wars