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TO: The Honorable Melony Griffith
Chair, Senate Finance Committee

FROM: Office of the Attorney General
Health Education and Advocacy Unit

RE: SB0375 – State Board of Physicians – Inactive and Emeritus Status:
Support with Amendment

The Health Education and Advocacy Unit of the Attorney General's Office supports SB0375 with a proposed amendment. This bill makes changes to the Board's authority with regard to placing a licensee on inactive and emeritus status under certain circumstances and for reinstating an inactive or emeritus status license. The HEAU recognizes the need to remove barriers to the active practice of trained and skilled physicians due to current and projected shortages of healthcare professionals in Maryland and around the country. However, the bill as currently drafted seems to remove the requirement for a licensee seeking reinstatement to provide any evidence of meeting continuing education requirements (currently 50 hours for each 2-year renewal period). Without evidence that a licensee has kept up with best practices, poor outcomes for consumers may result.

The healthcare industry is constantly evolving, either to solve new problems, enhance existing treatments, or expedite the way care is delivered to patients. A practitioner who does not keep pace with new developments and trends could end up providing a disservice to those in their care.

Over the course of nearly 40 years between 1977 and 2015, 39 systematic reviews of continuing medical education effectiveness consistently concluded that continuing education has a positive impact on physician performance and patient health outcomes. While the best way to deliver such education has been and continues to be debated, we found no published calls for the complete elimination of continuing medical education.
https://www.accme.org/sites/default/files/652_20141104_Effectiveness_of_Continuing

[Medical Education Cervero and Gaines.pdf.](#)

Maryland's sister states all require continuing education requirements to be met before a licensee's reinstatement. In Pennsylvania, the applicant must get caught up on CME requirements for the preceding biennial licensure period (100 hours); Virginia requires an applicant to document completion of 60 continued competency hours for each two-year period for up to four years (more than four years requires an examination); and in DC a reinstatement applicant must submit proof of completion of 50 hours of continuing medical practice for each year up to five years (inactive for more than five years requires an application for a new license).

The HEAU believes the bill's proponent will offer an amendment to clarify its intent to pend continuing education requirements only for the period of inactive or emeritus status and that an applicant for return to active status must meet the continuing education requirements set by the Board for renewing members. With such an amendment, the HEAU would support a favorable report for SB0375.