



## Maryland Community Health System

**Committee:** House Health and Government Operations Committee

**Bill:** House Bill 611 – State Board of Nursing – Sunset Extension, Licensure Exceptions, and Board Operations and Memberships

**Hearing Date:** February 9, 2023

**Position:** Support

---

The Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) strongly supports *House Bill 611 – State Board of Nursing – Sunset Extension, Licensure Exceptions, and Board Operations and Membership*. The bill establishes a three-year window where the Secretary will have authority over the infrastructure operations of the Maryland Board of Nursing, whereas the Board will retain authority to making licensure and disciplinary decisions.

MCHS is a network of federally qualified health centers focused on providing somatic, behavioral, and oral health care services to underserved communities. We have been struggling to recruit and retain nurse practitioners, nurse-midwives, and registered nurses to continue to serve people who have nowhere else to turn for primary care, prenatal and postpartum care, and other core health services. The extended processing time for initial and renewal licensure has had a severe impact on our ability to serve our patients. At times, our health centers have had to suspend services waiting for the Board to review an application. The situation is further complicated by difficulties in obtaining any information from the Board about the status of an application.

The bill provides an avenue for the Secretary of Health to support the Board in restructuring its operations, and most importantly, ensure that the Board's licensure processing times do not continue to further exacerbate the healthcare workforce shortage issue.

We strongly request a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Salliann Alborn at [salborn@mchsmd.com](mailto:salborn@mchsmd.com).