



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

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

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

FAVORABLE

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

For the record, my name is CAPTAIN Lynn Nash. I am the Communications Director for the Maryland Military Coalition. 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.

No one wants to have a health care professional taking care of them or their loved ones who isn't competent and cannot read and write in the English language. 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 of a foreign graduate 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 and ensure that the applicant has the competencies needed to practice safely and can communicate both orally and in writing in the English language. 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

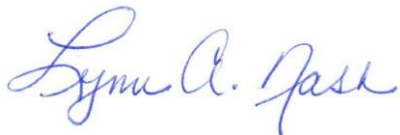
HB 454 – Health Occupations – Licenses, Certificates, and Registrations - Immigrants -**FAVORABLE**
February 22, 2023

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** Senate Bill SB 187 – Health

Thank you to Delegate Lopez for sponsoring this important legislation.

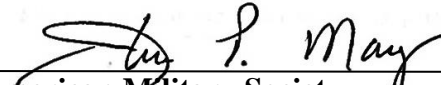
Respectfully,

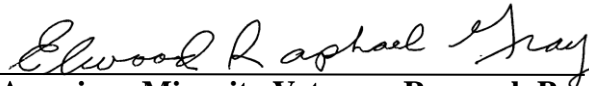
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynn A. Nash". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

Lynn A. Nash, PhD, RN, PHCNS-BC, FAAN


Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition


Air Force Sergeants Association


American Military Society



American Minority Veterans Research Project

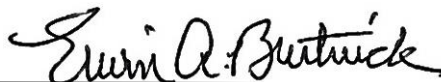

Association of the United States Navy



Commissioned Officers Association of the
US Public Health Service


Disabled American Veterans

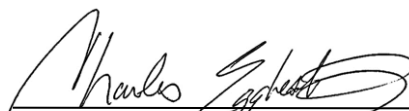

Distinguished Flying Cross Association



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