



Maryland Community Health System

Committee:	House Health and Government Operations Committee
Bill:	House Bill 454 - Health Occupations - Licenses, Certificates, and Registrations - Immigrants
Hearing Date:	February 22, 2023
Position:	Support

The Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports House Bill 454 - *Health Occupations - Licenses, Certificates, and Registrations - Immigrants*. The bill would prohibit an occupational board, including a health professional board, from denying a license based on immigration status. This bill would also permit an individual tax identification number (ITIN) to be used in the event the applicant does not have a social security number (SSN).

MCHS is a network of federally qualified health centers focused on providing somatic, behavioral, and oral health care services to underserved communities. Workforce challenges such as recruitment and retention have long existed in health care, even before the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges have only grown worse over the last few years and will likely remain even as we begin to navigate a post-pandemic world. This bill would provide more flexibility for federally qualified health centers to recruit two types of individuals who can work in the U.S. legally: 1) clinical students who are graduating and wish to remain in the U.S. to work; and 2) foreign-born clinicians who are willing to relocate to Maryland.

In addition, we would like to note that federally qualified health centers serve many immigrant communities. This legislation gives us the opportunity to employ clinicians who have strong connection with the communities they serve.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Michael Paddy at mpaddy@policypartners.net