



## TESTIMONY TO THE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

### HB0725: Funding for Wage Increases for Medical Provider Workers

**POSITION:** Support

**BY:** Nancy Soreng, President

**DATE:** March 7, 2023

The League of Women Voters Maryland supports **House Bill 725: Funding for Wage Increases for Medical Provider Workers**. This bill requires that the majority of the reimbursement rate increase for medical care providers in the Governor's proposed budget be used to fund wage increases to the healthcare workers involved in direct patient care.

The League is fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within institutions, **as well as in their distribution of resources**. Equity works to ensure that every person has an equal opportunity to succeed.

Per the Washington Post:<sup>1</sup> **"Black women are more overrepresented in health-care jobs than any other demographic groups, and are concentrated in the lowest-paid and most dangerous roles-** disparities that are the products of structural racism and sexism....Black women are more likely to work in those nursing homes and other long-term care settings that are most understaffed and under-resourced, leading to greater risk and exposure to injury or infection....**But while Black women do some of the hardest work in healthcare, their paychecks don't reflect it."**

This proposed legislation would mandate an equitable wage increase to the healthcare workers providing direct patient care to the elderly, disabled and chronically ill residents of assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and community residences. **Their important, difficult, and physically-demanding work enables residents to maintain their best possible quality of life and highest level of independence.** For this reason, the League and its 1,500+ members urge a favorable report on House Bill 725.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2022/02/24/black-women-health-care-jobs/>