



Maryland
Hospital Association

January 20, 2024

To: The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair, Senate Finance Committee

Re: Letter of Support- Senate Bill 167- Physician Assistants - Revisions (Physician Assistant Modernization Act of 2024)

Dear Chair Beidle:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 62 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 167.

Maryland hospitals continue to face staffing shortages, including among physicians. To fill these gaps, hospitals rely on physician assistants to act as physician extenders and increase access to care, especially primary care in underserved areas of the state. MHA's [2022 State of Maryland's Health Care Workforce report](#) outlines a roadmap to ensure Maryland has the health care workforce it needs now and into the future.

SB 167 would help modernize the practice and licensure of physician assistants in Maryland. Under the bill, physician assistants would practice under a "collaboration agreement" rather than a "delegation agreement" as required by current law. Under a "collaboration agreement" a physician assistant would not be required to practice in the constant physical presence of a collaborating physician on-site in the practice setting. These practice flexibilities would help physician assistants practice at the top of their scope, which is essential given projected workforce shortages and an aging population.

This bill represents a step forward in modernizing the physician assistant profession and interaction with physicians. Maryland hospitals support the goals of this bill to ensure physician assistants can practice at the top of their scope to help meet the health care needs of all Marylanders.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on SB 167.

For more information, please contact:
Jake Whitaker, Director, Government Affairs
Jwhitaker@mhaonline.org