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**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

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**SB 999**  
**Certified Nursing Assistants – Licensing Requirements**  
**and Administrative Updates**

Good afternoon, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present to you SB9990, Certified Nursing Assistants – Licensing Requirements and Administrative Updates.

SB999 is the result of the workgroup convened by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) in conjunction with the Maryland Board of Nursing at the request of this Committee and the House Health and Government Operation Committee. My testimony will reflect the bill with the amendments.

Maryland is the only state that has a different classification for those working in nursing facilities. This bill seeks to align Maryland with other states to allow a certified nursing assistant to work in all settings. In the late 1990's, federal regulations were implemented to set forth requirements for assistants in nursing facilities, which, for the most part, addressed education and training requirements focused on caring for the elderly.

While other states adopted those statements across all setting, Maryland created two tracks – one for nursing assistants and one for geriatric nursing assistants. To work in a nursing facility, an individual had to be a geriatric nursing assistant and meet the federal requirements. Over the years, this has caused issues and made it harder for nursing facilities to hire. Therefore, SB 999 will begin the process to unwind the two tracks by requiring all nursing assistant training programs to meet the federal requirements as well as State requirements by October 1, 2025, including requiring students to take the Board-approved competency evaluation.

This will then ensure that those individuals who have successfully completed a training program after October 1, 2025 will satisfy the federal requirements and will be able to work in all settings, providing greater flexibility for the assistants and ease the burden on nursing facilities.

Recognizing the workforce shortage, however, this bill will not require current certified nursing assistants working in non-nursing facility settings to meet the requirements. As such, for a time, there will still be two designations of certified nursing assistants – a I and II. Through attrition, Maryland will then move to only having one designation.

Along those same lines, the bill also addresses nursing students as well as acute training programs, which the witnesses will explain further.

Personally, I would like to see this done sooner but understand the need to make sure that there is adequate time to inform the training programs as well as the current nursing assistants.

I respectfully request a "Favorable Report" on SB 999.