

HB 806/SB0167– Physician Assistants – Revisions (Physician Assistant
Modernization Act of 2024)

Support Testimony of **Kathryn Gossard**

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Good afternoon, members of the Senate and House Committees.

My name is **Kathryn Gossard**, a Maryland licensed nurse practitioner, working for University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore, Maryland. I support the bill, SB0167 - Physician Assistant Modernization Act of 2024 legislation put forth by the Maryland Academy of Physician Assistants (MdAPA).

As you know, Maryland is facing significant healthcare provider shortages. These shortages are placing undue pressure on the practicing providers and limiting patients access to care, particularly within primary care, women’s health, behavioral health, underserved and rural communities. Physician assistants are trained on an accelerated medical model and a team-based approach, which includes collaboration with Physicians and other health professionals. The administrative barriers that exist when hiring PAs in Maryland, increase both the administrative and cost burden on hospitals, private clinics and all healthcare facilities. The proposed legislation focuses on removal of these administrative barriers, which delay the employment and utilization of well-trained, compassionate PAs, who can assist in reducing the gap in access to care, as well as the unprecedented healthcare shortage.

Physician Assistants are highly skilled medical practitioners trained in depth under the physician model of training. They are imperative to our practice in Orthopaedics and our patients get not only skilled experts in their care but the personal touch and accessibility that many physicians cannot provide due to the increasing age of the population and influx of patients. Other states understand the value add that PAs bring to practice outside of Maryland and it is time that Maryland understands the important role that PAs play within patient care and accessibility to care issues. The administrative barriers which are imposed upon PAs is only hindering the care of our aging baby boomer population and creating further healthcare disparity. I support this bill wholeheartedly. We need a change in support of our PAs to reduce these gaps in healthcare and avoid further shortage in our dwindling healthcare provider network. I ask that you support and enact this legislation on behalf of our patients, communities, and state.

Thank you for your time and commitment to Maryland,

Kathryn Gossard, MSN, CRNP, FNP-C, PMP