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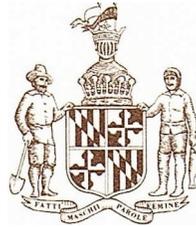
Legislative District 12A

Howard County

Health and Government Operations
Committee

Subcommittees

Government Operations and
Health Facilities
Public Health and Minority
Health Disparities



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES

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SUPPORT

HB1054– Physicians- Licensing – Foreign Practicing Physicians

Chair Pena-Melnik, Vice-chair Cullison, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

HB1054 helps address our physician shortage problem by establishing an abbreviated pathway by which physicians who trained and have practiced for a minimum of 5 years can gain Maryland licensure without repeating residency training. The pathway is designed to provide a means of assessing not just that the applicant has not only adequate medical knowledge and professional training and experience but also an understanding of and respect for the standard of care to which we expect all licenses to adhere.

The shortage of physicians in our state underscores the pressing need to embrace qualified professionals who have received their training and practiced medicine abroad.^{1, 2} Recent statistics from January 2024 reveal concerning healthcare physician shortages across Maryland, encompassing its 24 counties, which includes Baltimore City.³ Specifically, 58% of counties face county-wide shortages, 33% report partial shortages, leaving merely two counties, or 8%, with an adequate number of physicians.³

While pathways exist in statute for immigrant physicians to obtain Maryland licensure, and even for the waiving of a year of the additional residency training, the competition for residency positions and other barriers effectively mean that many well-qualified immigrant physicians do not do so, effectively wasting much of their years of training and professional expertise as they are redirected to find work in related professions.

[Maryland Licensing Guides for Immigrant Physicians - Upwardly Global](#)

HB1054 would require foreign practicing physician applicants to have graduated from a foreign medical school and demonstrate a minimum of 5 years of medical professional practice outside of the United States, and maintenance of good standing with the medical licensing or regulatory authority in their home country. After obtaining certification from the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) and passing any additional testing the Board may require, the applicant would be allowed to practice under a provisional license for two years and the care provided over that period would be audited based on an evaluation tool to be developed by a consortium of the Maryland residency training programs.

Amendments proposed by supporter of the idea of an alternative pathway would change HB1054 into a workgroup establishment bill. The workgroup with representatives from the Maryland State Medical Society, the Maryland Hospital Association, the Maryland Board of Physicians, the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, and the University of Maryland School of Medicine would be tasked to:

- (1) Examine, report, and provide recommendations to the Maryland General Assembly on various topics including, but not limited to:
 - The current licensure process for foreign practicing physicians in the state.
 - Licensure processes in other states for foreign practicing physicians.
 - Potential improvements to the licensure process for foreign practicing physicians in Maryland.
 - Identification of any concerns regarding the proper verification of training and experience of foreign practicing physicians.

Citations:

¹ [Maryland Physician Shortage Facts](#)

² [Physician Challenges in Maryland](#)

³ [Map of Health Professional Shortage Areas: Primary Care, by County, 2024](#)

HB1054 with or without the amendment, presents an opportunity to alleviate physician shortages and welcome the invaluable contributions that immigrant physicians can offer in improving health care service access and delivery for the residents of our state.

I urge your favor for **HB1054** to better integrate Foreign Practicing Physicians while maintaining rigorous licensure standards, into the state's healthcare system.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "D. P. S.", written in a cursive style.

Citations: