



Statement of Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA)

To Ways and Means Committee

Chair: Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary

February 12, 2024

House Bill 0837: More Opportunities for Career-Focused Students Act of 2024

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and members of the committee, the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA), are in SUPPORT of House Bill 0837: More Opportunities for Career-Focused Students Act of 2024

There are significant vacancies in the rural healthcare workforce. “About 20 percent of Americans live in rural areas, but barely one-tenth of physicians practice there. The federal government projects a shortage of over 20,000 primary care physicians in rural areas by 2025” (Nielsen et al., 2017). These shortages aren’t just among the primary care physicians and nurses, certified nursing assistants, behavioral health professionals, and community health workers. This critical legislation can help alleviate some burdens by educating and informing students of the possible healthcare career possibilities through apprenticeships and obtaining certifications to enter the workforce directly. We urge a favorable report.

*On behalf of the Maryland Rural Health Association,
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