

Senate Bill 72
Health Occupations Boards - English Proficiency Requirements and Licensure by
Endorsement for Nursing

Finance
January 28, 2025
Support

Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports SB72, which prohibits health occupation boards from requiring additional English proficiency evidence if an applicant already holds a valid license from another state with an English requirement. It also expands acceptable proof of English competency for nurses, including federal exams and multistate licenses. This streamlines the licensure process and helps ensure qualified nurses can enter the workforce more quickly.

For a century, Catholic Charities has provided care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. We accompany Marylanders as they age with dignity, support their pursuit of employment and career advancement, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve economic independence, prepare for educational success, and welcome immigrant neighbors into Maryland communities. As Maryland's second largest human service provider, we are deeply committed to helping those who need it most.

In line with this commitment, we support SB72 for two key reasons:

First, it will help reduce the shortage of multilingual nurses in Maryland, which is especially critical in our diverse communities where non-English speaking patients are often underserved. By allowing nurses with valid licenses from other states to more easily practice here, this bill helps increase the number of qualified professionals who can meet the needs of these populations.

Second, this bill supports and increases employment opportunities for Marylanders. Access to steady employment enables individuals to support themselves and their families. At Catholic Charities, we offer job training programs that connect skilled workers to employers who need their help. Our programs, such as the Christopher's Place Employment Academy, My Brother's Keeper, and Compassionate Caregiver, focus on empowering individuals with the skills and support they need to build sustainable careers. These programs are dedicated to helping un- or underemployed Marylanders, including those entering the nursing field, and fostering career growth across a wide range of industries.

For these reasons, Catholic Charities of Baltimore respectfully urges the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 72.

Submitted By: Madelin Martinez, Assistant Director of Advocacy