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**Testimony of Simmy King DNP, MS, MBA, NI-BC, NE-BC, CHSE, FAAN  
Chief Nursing Informatics and Education Officer  
Children's National Hospital**

**Senate Bill 72: Health Occupations Boards - English Proficiency Requirements and Licensure by  
Endorsement for Nursing  
Position: FAVORABLE  
January 28, 2025  
Senate Finance Committee**

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill 72. My name is Simmy King, and I am the Chief Nursing Informatics and Education Officer at Children's National Hospital. Children's National has been serving the nation's children since 1870. Nearly 60% of our patients are residents of Maryland, and we maintain a network of community-based pediatric practices, surgery centers and regional outpatient centers in Maryland.

I am pleased to express my strong support for Senate Bill 72, which addresses the English proficiency requirements and licensure by endorsement for health occupations, particularly nursing. I believe in this legislation as both an advocate for equitable access to professional licensure as well as an individual who has experienced similar educational and professional challenges. Years ago, I was asked to take an English Proficiency test for a doctoral program because my country of origin was India. Despite having two Master's degrees from US schools and having practiced in the US for over eight years, I was asked to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), which I had already taken when I received my green card and when I went through the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) visa screen – a process that requires evidence of English-language competency for both spoken and written English. I believe that this bill is a crucial step forward in enabling qualified professionals to serve our communities without unnecessary barriers – barriers that myself and so many others have faced and continue to face.

Senate Bill 72 aims to streamline the licensure process for health professionals who have already demonstrated their English proficiency and competence in other states. This bill promotes fairness and efficiency by preventing health occupation boards from requiring additional evidence of English proficiency from applicants holding valid, unrestricted licenses

from states with comparable requirements. It acknowledges other states' rigorous standards and eliminates redundant testing that can delay workforce entry.

Furthermore, the bill mandates that health occupation boards maintain a list of states whose English proficiency requirements align with Maryland's standards. This transparency will assist applicants in navigating the licensure process more swiftly and confidently, knowing which credentials are recognized. Including acceptable proofs of English proficiency, such as passing an English proficiency exam approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or holding a valid multistate license under the Nurse Licensure Compact, exemplifies the bill's commitment to recognizing diverse pathways to demonstrating language competency. Additionally, Senate Bill 72 underscores the importance of practical experience by exempting applicants who have practiced nursing for at least five years in another state from additional English proficiency testing. This provision ensures that experienced professionals can contribute to our healthcare system without unnecessary delays.

Senate Bill 72 is thoughtful and necessary legislation that will benefit healthcare professionals and the communities that they serve. This bill supports efficient and equitable licensure of health professionals in Maryland by reducing redundant requirements, promoting transparency, and recognizing diverse qualifications. In an effort to help us move toward a more inclusive and efficient healthcare system, I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 72. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simmy King". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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