



Maryland  
Hospital Association

## **Senate Bill 458- Health Occupations - Structural Racism Training**

**Position: *Support***

February 11, 2025

Senate Finance Committee

### **MHA Position**

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of Senate Bill 458.

Maryland hospitals supported legislation that passed in 2020 to require implicit bias training for maternal health care providers and the expansion to all individuals licensed or certified by a health occupations board in 2021. SB 458 adds required training for structural racism.

Structural racism – a system of policies, practices, and beliefs that discriminate against people based on their race or ethnicity – affects people's access to housing, education, jobs, healthcare, and the criminal justice system. As such, dismantling structural racism requires an all hands-on-deck approach. SB 458 engages health care providers by requiring those licensed by a health occupations board to complete structural racism training to renew their license or certificate. Adding this requirement will spread awareness and encourage discourse and empathy for health care workers interacting with patients from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

The University of Maryland in partnership with the Maryland Nurses Association will develop this training to share with hospitals. A similar approach was utilized when maternal health workers were required to attest to the completion of implicit bias training. The Maryland Patient Safety Center worked with hospitals to provide this required training.

SB 458 aligns with MHA's commitment to improving workplace diversity, equity, and inclusion, and advancing health equity for all Marylanders. As the state prepares to enter the States Advancing All-Payer Health Equity Approaches and Development (AHEAD) Model, prioritizing health equity becomes even more critical. Equipping Maryland's health care workforce with the tools to understand and dismantle structural racism is a key component of this work.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on SB 458.

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