



SB 458
Health Occupations - Structural Racism Training
Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Beidle and members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Ricarra Jones, and I am the Political Director with 1199SEIU- the largest healthcare union in the nation, where we represent over 10,000 healthcare workers in Maryland. 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East is Maryland's largest healthcare union, representing over 400,000 healthcare workers across the East Coast. 1199 SEIU strongly supports SB 458 which would embed structural racism training into the license and certificate renewal process for healthcare workers.

1199SEIU has committed to fighting structural racism in healthcare through advocacy on social determinants of health, higher wages for low-income communities, and increased access to care for communities of color. Structural racism is when laws and policies prioritize certain groups over others, resulting in unequal opportunity to healthcare, jobs, housing, education, and safe environment.

To address ongoing racism and mitigate bias in healthcare professionals, acknowledging and educating healthcare workers about structural racism is one step towards an anti-racist perspective that can inform all healthcare education, research, and practice. Providing equitable, unbiased care is the responsibility of all clinicians. However, unconscious biases and racist attitudes of healthcare workers, specifically those of physicians and nurses, are a substantial contributing factor to health disparities. SB 458 is an important step towards educating healthcare professionals about the ways structural racism impacts patients and healthcare. For those reasons, 1199 SEIU supports SB 458.

Sincerely,

Ricarra Jones
Political Director
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