



“Advocating for Nurse Practitioners since 1992”

January 30, 2025

Bill: SB 407- State Board of Nursing - Advanced Practice Nursing Licensure and Specialty Certification - Reciprocity Discussions (Maryland Border States Advanced Practice Nursing Act)

Position: **Support**

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the committee:

On behalf of over 850 members of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland (NPAM), and the more than 10,000 Advanced Practice Nurses (APRNs) licensed in Maryland, I am writing in support of SB 407.

In 2024, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) introduced and passed legislation authorizing health occupations boards that did not otherwise have statutory authority to do so, to adopt regulations establishing reciprocity for individuals who are licensed or certified in another State that also offers similar reciprocity. (SB 221/HB 146). Our association, along with most of the legislature supported that bill which was due to be effective 7/1/2024. To date there are no regulations in process.

The Nurse Practitioner Association requests support for Senate Bill 407, which directs the Maryland State Board of Nursing (MBON) to pursue advanced practice reciprocity agreements with our Border States: including Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. This bill requires the MBON to report back annually on the status of these negotiations, including whether agreements have been entered into and those terms. If no negotiations have been made, reasons and barriers to entering into these agreements along with suggestions for any regulatory or legislative changes necessary to facilitate such reciprocity should be reported.

Maryland faces ongoing challenges in maintaining an adequate healthcare workforce, particularly in underserved and rural areas. By facilitating licensure reciprocity with neighboring states, this bill will make it easier for qualified healthcare providers to practice in Maryland. The Board of Nursing can and should pursue these conversations immediately. In fact, the Board of Physicians has implemented reciprocal agreements with Virginia and DC and said that

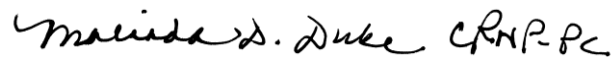
the "option has proved very popular, and in the first four months alone, the Board issued more than 80 licenses by reciprocity."

The success of these agreements is why last year the Maryland Dept. of Health introduced the Reciprocity Bill. These agreements are negotiated independently by health occupations boards. They give each health occupations board more control when choosing to enter a reciprocity agreement. MDH advises that licensure by reciprocity for health care professionals in surrounding states is needed (1) due to the proximity and corresponding geographical relationship of nearby states; (2) to improve access to care and treatment, particularly for rural State residents; and (3) to address current health care workforce challenges.

This bill will strengthen healthcare access and delivery across our state. We believe this bill represents a practical, common-sense, speedy solution to healthcare access for all Marylanders. We request a favorable report for SB 407.

If there are further questions or concerns, please reach out to our Association. Thank you.

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Malinda D. Duke CPNP-PC". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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