

House Health and Government Operations Committee

January 28, 2025

**HB 19 - Health Occupations - Nursing - Loan Repayment, Education, and Sunset
Extension (Building Opportunities for Nurses Act of 2025)**

Position: Unfavorable

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, opposes **HB 19** as written. While MACC appreciates the intent of this legislation to address the critical nursing shortage, the removal of nursing support staff from eligibility under the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program (LARP) would exclude a vital segment of the healthcare workforce from receiving financial assistance they rely on to continue their education and career advancement.

Many nursing support staff enroll in Maryland's community colleges and these institutions play a pivotal role in training Maryland's healthcare workforce by offering affordable, high-quality education to thousands of students each year. **If nursing support staff eligibility in the LARP program is restored, MACC would be inclined to drop its opposition and support the legislation.**

By reinstating nursing support staff in the legislation, HB 19 would provide valuable financial relief to a broader range of healthcare workers and further strengthen Maryland's commitment to supporting the healthcare workforce. The bill would serve as an important tool in retaining and attracting qualified individuals to critical healthcare roles, reinforcing the state's investment in a stable and skilled workforce.

We appreciate the Committee's consideration and urge members to ensure that nursing support staff remain eligible under the program to maintain a strong healthcare workforce pipeline. As currently written, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **UNFAVORABLE** vote on **HB 19** – however, we look forward to working to address MACC's concerns.

Please contact Brad Phillips (bphillips@mdacc.org) or Drew Jabin (djabin@mdacc.org) with questions.