



Board of Nursing

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

March 11th, 2025

The Honorable Joselyn Pena-Melnyk
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 240
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 1437 – Catastrophic Health Emergency – Immunity for Health Care Providers – Repeal

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Board of Nursing (the Board) respectfully submits this letter of opposition for HB 1437 – Catastrophic Health Emergency – Immunity for Health Care Providers – Repeal. This bill removes the provision that grants health care providers immunity from civil or criminal liability when they act in good faith under a catastrophic health emergency proclamation.

The COVID pandemic exposed the world not only to a new novel corona virus, but to an unprecedented way of life. More than any other occupation, medical professionals had to alter lives and jobs to both protect themselves and the people they were charged with treating. Providers needed to act on their feet to save lives, and often in ways not typical to their usual practice. Their ability to do this is contingent on the fact that they can be confident they will not be prosecuted when acting in these emergency situations. Removing this immunity as this bill does would make providers reluctant to act during a state of emergency, putting patients at risk and potentially forcing the Board to adjudicate cases in which a provider was acting in the patient's best interest. COVID-19 will certainly not be our state's last serious health-related state of emergency, and in those situations we will need to rely on the judgement and expertise of our nurses and other practitioners to keep Marylanders safe. That is why the Board is opposed to HB 1437, and asks the Committee for an unfavorable report.

Thank you again for your time. For more information, please contact Ms. Mitzi Fishman, Director of Legislative Affairs, at 410-585-2049 or mitzi.fishman@maryland.gov, or Ms. Rhonda Scott, Executive Director, at 410-585-1953 or rhonda.scott2@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Christine Lechlitter
Board President

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