



MedStar Health

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SB 681 – Health Care Malpractice Claims - Health Care Provider - Definition

Position: ***Support***

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

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MedStar Health is the largest healthcare provider in Maryland and the Washington, D.C. region. MedStar Health offers a comprehensive spectrum of clinical services through over 400 care locations, including 10 hospitals, 33 urgent care clinics, ambulatory care centers and an extensive array of primary and specialty care providers. We are also home to the MedStar Health Research Institute and a comprehensive scope of health-related organizations all recognized regionally and nationally for excellence. MedStar Health has one of the largest graduate medical education programs in the country, training 1,150 medical residents annually, and is the medical education and clinical partner of Georgetown University. As a not-for-profit healthcare system, MedStar Health is committed to its patient-first philosophy, emphasizing care, compassion, and clinical excellence, supported by a dedicated team of more than 35,000 physicians, nurses, and many other clinical and non-clinical associates.

SB 681 seeks to amend the definition of “health care provider” under the Health Care Malpractice Claims Act (HCMCA) to include all healthcare providers. The legislation aims to update the law to match the constant evolution of the healthcare industry and staffing realities. The current statute defines those health care providers covered under the cap by listing specific provider groups such as physicians, nurses, dentists, etc. The bill proposes to broaden the definition to include employees, agents, or contractors of hospitals who are licensed, certified, registered, or authorized to render health care services in Maryland.

Without the expanded definition, healthcare providers who are in a group not specifically listed in HCMCA may be exposed to claims of higher or even unlimited damages. The intent of the HCMCA was to ensure that all those who render healthcare to patients have the same liability protections under the law. Ensuring that all who are authorized to render care have the liability protection established by HCMCA, will encourage the continued development of innovative staffing and care models that will enable healthcare organizations to meet the staffing challenges they face today.

For the reasons above, MedStar Health urges a ***favorable*** report on **SB 681**.

It's how we treat people.