



50 Harry S. Truman Parkway • Annapolis, MD 21401
Office: 410-841-5772 • Voice: 410-841-5761 • TTY: 800-735-2258
Email: rmc.mda@maryland.gov
Website: www.rural.maryland.go

Susan O'Neill, Chair

Charlotte Davis, Executive Director

Testimony in Support of
House Bill 496 – Income Tax - Credits for Nursing Program Preceptors in Areas with Health
Care Workforce Shortages – Alterations
House Ways and Means Committee
February 6, 2025

The Rural Maryland Council supports House Bill 496 – Income Tax - Credits for Nursing Program Preceptors in Areas with Health Care Workforce Shortages – Alterations. This bill proposes to reduce the number of training hours required for certain health care practitioners in a nursing program preceptor rotation from 100 to 90. This change is intended to qualify these practitioners for specific credits against the State income tax when they serve as preceptors in areas facing health care workforce shortages. Additionally, the bill mandates that the Department of Health submit an annual report to the Comptroller by January 31, detailing the tax credit certificates issued, and to the General Assembly, providing information on the utilization of the credit.

Rural Marylanders are often in worse health than their urban and suburban counterparts and lack access to medical facilities and practitioners to improve their health. This is especially true in specialty areas such as mental health and dental care. Additionally, rural areas are made up of aging populations that require more medical attention but lack the healthcare workforce to do so. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) reports that more than 1.1 million Marylanders are in a primary care Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA). That's over 1.1 million Marylanders who lack access to the primary health care they need. In the U.S., rural or partially rural areas make up over 68% of the designated primary care HPSAs.

House Bill 496 will allow more high-level healthcare workers to practice in Maryland where there are shortages or nurses are needed. While certain areas of the State have been facing a shortage of healthcare workers, it was worsened by the pandemic. As a result of the pandemic, members of the healthcare workforce are leaving at higher rates, mostly from the increased workload and amount of stress that they have been facing. As some healthcare workers quit, it creates more of a workload and stress for the remaining members, resulting in a cycle of burnout. This bill will allow workers to adequately perform their jobs and ensure that patients are getting the treatment that they need.

The Rural Maryland Council respectfully requests your favorable support of House Bill 496.

The Rural Maryland Council (RMC) is an independent state agency governed by a nonpartisan, 40-member board that consists of inclusive representation from the federal, state, regional, county, and municipal governments, as well as the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. We bring together federal, state, county, and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to identify challenges unique to rural communities and to craft public policy, programmatic, or regulatory solutions.

“A Collective Voice for Rural Maryland”