



# Board of Physicians

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Harbhajan Ajrawat, M.D., Chair

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## 2026 SESSION POSITION PAPER

**BILL NO.:** House Bill 557 - Occupational Licensing and Certification – Criminal History – Predetermination Review Process  
**COMMITTEE:** Economic Matters  
**POSITION:** Letter of Support

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The Maryland Board of Physicians, the Maryland Board of Physical Therapy Examiners, the Maryland Board of Acupuncture, the Maryland Board of Nursing, and the Maryland Board of Pharmacy (the Boards) are respectfully submitting this Letter of Support for House Bill (HB) 557 - Occupational Licensing and Certification - Criminal History - Predetermination Review Process. HB 557 establishes a predetermination review process for certain occupational licenses and certificates to inform individuals if their prior criminal history would prevent them from being licensed or certified.

The Boards strongly support the intent of the legislation and second chances. This is reflected in current practices. When a criminal conviction is present, the Boards will communicate with the applicant to understand the full scope of the conviction, often resulting in the Boards being able to license or license with conditions. It is exceedingly rare that an application is denied based solely on the grounds of a criminal conviction. A predetermination process would prevent the Boards from being able to consider the full facts of a criminal conviction, which may cause the Boards to err on the side of caution for applicants who may otherwise be able to be licensed.

The Boards have worked diligently with Delegate Harrison to ensure that the intent of this legislation is protected without unintended consequences. The Boards and the Delegate have worked collaboratively to amend the health occupations boards out of HB 557, and the Boards have committed to providing more transparency on the existing process to ensure that potential applicants have a thorough understanding of how criminal convictions impact licensure.

We appreciate the Delegate's willingness to address this matter and commitment to collaboration. We look forward to continuing to work together in the future.

Thank you for your consideration. For more information, please contact Michael Tran, Health Policy Analyst at the Maryland Board of Physicians, at (410) 764-3786.

Sincerely,

Harbhajan Ajrawat, M.D.  
Chair, Maryland Board of Physicians

**The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Maryland Department of Health or the Administration.**