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Health Committee

Subcommittees

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of House Bill 1284: Residential Service Agencies - Private Duty
Nursing - On-Site Nurse Training Programs**

Finance Committee

March 31, 2026

Good afternoon, Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the Finance Committee. I'm Delegate Pam Guzzone, representing Howard County's District 13, and I am here in support of House Bill 1284, which would enable residential service agency to provide training to a licensed private duty nurse in place of clinical experience requirements.

Private duty nurses are an essential component of Maryland's healthcare system, providing in-home care to vulnerable patients, often children with complex chronic conditions, so they can lead full and meaningful lives. Their services ensure continuity of care, reduce preventable hospitalizations, and deliver compassionate, individualized support that safeguards patients' safety, dignity, and overall well-being. Yet, like many areas of the healthcare workforce, a complex web of issues has led Maryland to face a shortage of private duty nurses. Without adequate access to these services, many children are forced into prolonged stays in far more expensive settings, such as hospitals, separated from the comfort and stability of their homes.

This shortage is compounded by the fact that Maryland has experience requirements for private duty nurses that are among the highest in the nation. The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) requires all private duty nurses who work with individuals under 19 years of age to have at least one year of clinical pediatric experience within the last three years. Maryland is the only state with this mandate. Most other states allow registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) without extensive experience to provide care, with appropriate training requirements and generally under supervision.

HB1284 brings Maryland into line with other states by ensuring that private duty nurses receive the appropriate training necessary for high quality care. It would allow residential service agencies to employ registered nurses who have not meet the State's current experience requirements, provided that the RSA has a MDH approved training program, ensures clinical supervision by a nurse qualified for private duty nursing, and conducts frequent competency evaluations.

Implementing this legislation has several advantages. First, it will increase the supply of nurses, especially LPNs, qualified to provide private duty nursing services, helping to alleviate the current shortage and provide needed care. It enables residential service agencies to tailor training to the unique needs of their patients, equipping nurses to effectively address the specialized care requirements of those they serve. Finally, it will bring Maryland into line with the other states in the country, making private duty nursing more accessible and preventing us from losing qualified nurses to states with less restrictive regulations.

Thank you and I respectfully request a favorable report on HB1284.