



Board of Nursing

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D., Secretary

March 31, 2026

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 1372 – Public Health - Office of Health Care Quality Information and Maryland Department of Health Centralization Commission - Letter of Information

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members:

The Maryland Board of Nursing (the Board) respectfully submits this letter of information for HB 1372 Public Health - Office of Health Care Quality Information and Maryland Department of Health Centralization Commission. This bill would create a Health Centralization Commission within the Department of Health (the Department) with the goal of unifying the administrative and licensing work of the health occupations boards. Though intentionally structured as a semi-independent, peer-regulated body, the Board enjoys a close and unique relationship with the Department. This model protects the public by ensuring that professional standards are developed and enforced by subject matter experts while remaining accountable to both the Secretary and the General Assembly. The Board takes very seriously the goals of efficiency and accountability to its constituents; however, given the disparate functions of the various boards, and informed by the recent successes of the Board to achieve those goals, the Board wishes to highlight some aspects of the bill for the Committee.

1. The premise of the bill seems to be the Office of Legislative Audits (OLA) report that assessed the Boards from September 25, 2019, through July 31, 2023. During these assessments the Department of Health saw extraordinary disruptions and setbacks including a cyber-attack, high employee vacancy rates, and a backlog of unaddressed complaints that resulted from these unique and structural issues. Since the publishing of the report, the Board has worked diligently to address these issues, and it has cleared more than 2000 complaints from the backlog mentioned in the report, with 1296 outstanding in the Board's annual report of July 2025, down from the 3307 noted just two years before. Should a Commission be formed, it is essential that they use the most up-to-date information to inform their decisions.

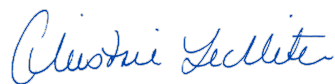
2. Utilizing the Board's special funds to fund a department-wide licensure system contradicts statutory requirements regarding funding acquisition and use. The Board's special fund is acquired through licensure fees and those fees are statutorily required to cover only the cost of effective regulation of nurses and the other allied professions under the Board's specific jurisdiction (Health Occupations, 8-206(b)(2), Annotated Code of Maryland). If the funds are mandated to be allocated to this additional expense, there is concern that it will result in

increased licensure fees on a constituency that would receive no increase or improvement in service.

3. The Board currently has a strong relationship with both the other boards and the Department. Since 2023, the Department has had authority over the Board's infrastructure operations, a relationship that has been extremely beneficial for the Board, allowing resources to go to the essential services on which our constituents depend. It is important that any commission formed by the bill takes into consideration the unique relationship between the Board and the Department.

The Board is supportive of further collaboration with the other boards, and looks forward to working with the sponsor and the General Assembly in creating a more efficient system for Marylanders. The Board hopes the information provided is useful in assessing HB 1372 and thanks the Committee for its 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 Lechliter
Board President

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