

## Senate Bill 489 - Health Occupations - Physicians Trained in International Medical Schools

### POSITION: Support with Amendments

February 17, 2026

Senate Finance Committee

The University of Maryland Medical System (“UMMS”) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for Senate Bill 489 – Health Occupations – Physicians Trained in International Medical Schools. Senate Bill 489 (“SB 489”) proposes to streamline the process for internationally trained physicians to practice medicine in the State of Maryland.

UMMS is supportive of the bill sponsor’s efforts to expand the healthcare workforce. Our health system continues to face a workforce shortage, which includes a physician shortage in specialties such as anesthesia, cardiology, gastroenterology, primary care, and radiology. UMMS believes that this legislation can help mitigate some of the workforce shortage by reducing barriers to entry for international physicians.

While UMMS is supportive of the intent of the legislation, there are additional steps that could be taken to ensure the State’s academic medical centers, the University of Maryland School of Medicine/University of Maryland Medical Center and Johns Hopkins University & Medicine are able to attract and retain international faculty. In particular, UMMS supports amendments proposed by the University of Maryland Faculty Physicians, Inc. and the University of Maryland School of Medicine to establish a new limited license for candidates employed by a school of medicine. Individuals would be eligible to apply for such a license if they met the following criteria:

1. **Letter of recommendation** from the Dean of a School of Medicine in Maryland;
2. **Employment** at a school of medicine in the State or the National Institutes of Health (NIH);
3. **Completion of at least 2 years of post-graduate training** similar to an ACGME accredited residency program; and
4. **Licensed to practice medicine** in a country other than the United States **for a period of at least 7 years.**

The ability to practice would be limited to within the scope of employment of the school of medicine or the National Institutes of Health, and an individual would only be eligible while employed at the school of medicine or NIH. Such a license would allow Maryland schools of medicine to better compete with neighboring states, such as Virginia, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia for top international clinical faculty.

The Committee also recently considered a separate bill related to internationally trained physicians, SB 380, that seeks to address shortages of physicians more broadly. It is critical to note that the limited license pathway outlined above would complement – and not conflict with or duplicate – that framework. The license proposed within SB 380 would be available to internationally trained physicians who are already domiciled in Maryland. However, to satisfy critical gaps in care, UMMS and the UM School of Medicine must proactively recruit experienced physicians abroad. Experienced physicians are unlikely to relocate to Maryland unless our licensure process is significantly more predictable and streamlined than it is today. The UM School of Medicine has lost numerous international candidates to other states’ medical schools because their state licensure pathways are more efficient and certain.

Finally, the issue of licensing internationally trained physicians is important to UMMS and our partners at the UM School of Medicine. Along with other stakeholders, we worked during the interim to craft amendments that can improve the process for licensing international physicians. These conversations are ongoing during this legislative session. We are hopeful that all parties will be able to work together to modernize Maryland’s international physicians licensing process, and in the process make Maryland more competitive with surrounding states that have already streamlined their licensing processes for international physicians.

For these reasons, the University of Maryland Medical System supports SB 489 with amendments, and respectfully requests a *favorable* report on the bill.

For more information, please contact:

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