

**TESTIMONY FOR HB0598 – Physicians – Licensing – Internationally Trained Physicians
– FAVORABLE**

Bill Sponsors: Delegates Hill, Bagnall, Feldmark, Guzzone, Lehman, Smith, and Wu

Committee: Health

Organization Submitting:

Person Submitting: Rebecca M. Turner

Position: **FAVORABLE**

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB0598 on behalf of Rebecca M. Turner

HB0598 addresses a critical and growing challenge in Maryland’s healthcare system: the shortage of qualified physicians, particularly in underserved and rural communities.

This bill authorizes the State Board of Physicians to issue a time-limited license—up to three years—to internationally trained physicians who meet rigorous educational, training, and professional standards. It also requires the Board to establish clear regulations and a pathway to full licensure, ensuring that Maryland maintains high-quality care while expanding access to experienced medical professionals.

These provisions are both necessary and urgent.

Maryland, like much of the nation, faces persistent physician shortages across primary care, behavioral health, and specialty fields. Internationally trained physicians constitute a highly skilled, deeply experienced workforce—many of whom already live in Maryland but are unable to practice because administrative and structural barriers do not align with their training or professional backgrounds.

HB0598 removes unnecessary obstacles while preserving strong safeguards. The bill requires that eligible physicians:

- Hold a medical degree from a World Health Organization–recognized institution,
- Have completed at least two years of postgraduate training equivalent to U.S. residency standards,
- Have practiced medicine for at least five of the past seven years,

- Maintain good standing with their home-country medical regulatory authority, and
- Hold a valid certification from the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates.

These are not shortcuts. They are evidence-based, internationally recognized indicators of competence and professionalism.

By creating a structured, supervised pathway for internationally trained physicians to serve Maryland patients, HB0598 strengthens our healthcare workforce, reduces wait times, expands access to care, and improves health outcomes—especially in communities that have long struggled to recruit and retain physicians.

I urge the Committee to support this thoughtful, practical, and urgently needed legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. **I respectfully urge a FAVORABLE report on HB0598.**

Rebecca M. Turner

21 Walnut Hill Road

La Plata, MD 20646