



NURSE PRACTITIONER
Association of Maryland

“Advocating for Maryland NPs Since 1992”

Bill: Physician Assistants-Parity with Other Health Care Practitioners (Physician Assistant Parity Act of 2026)

Position: Support with Amendments

Dear Chair, Vice- Chair, and Members of the Finance Committee:

On behalf of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland (NPAM), which represents more than 6,000 dedicated nurse practitioners and over 825 active NPAM members who provide high-quality, patient-centered primary care, specialty care, and behavioral health services across Maryland's urban, suburban, and rural communities, we respectfully submit this letter **in support with amendments.**

This bill seeks to modernize Maryland statutes by expanding parity among health care practitioners in multiple sections of law, including guardianship determinations, mental health admissions, emergency evaluations, and participation in advisory commissions. NPAM supports efforts that enhance healthcare accessibility, streamline administrative processes, and ensure that qualified clinicians can exercise their professional abilities to the fullest extent of their educational, licensure, and certification. However, to ensure clinical clarity, patient safety, and consistency across Maryland law, NPAM respectfully requests that the Committee consider the following amendment. **Update all sections pertaining to mental health that say “Physician Assistant” to “Physician Assistant with specialized Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ) in Psychiatry.”**

For purposes of this subtitle, any health care practitioner authorized to conduct a psychiatric examination, certification, or emergency evaluation shall have documented education, training, and clinical experience in psychiatric–mental health care consistent with the function performed.

This will ensure statutory alignment with professional education, certification standards, and patient safety expectations while preserving the bill’s intent to promote access and parity.

With the amendments outlined above, the bill will more accurately reflect clinical training standards, promote safe and effective care delivery, and maintain consistency across Maryland's health statutes.

Thank you for considering our comments and for your continued commitment to improving the health of Maryland residents. We would welcome the opportunity to serve as a resource to the Committee as this legislation moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Claire Bode".

Claire Bode, DNP, CRNP
NPAM Legislative Chair
On behalf of the
Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland (NPAM)
Office: 443-367-0277
NPAM Web Site: <http://www.npamonline.org>