



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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

February 18, 2026

The Honorable Heather Bagnall
Chair, House Health Committee
Room 240, Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 598 – Physicians - Licensing - Internationally Trained Physicians

Dear Chair Bagnall and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the Department) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for House Bill (HB) 598 - Physicians - Licensing - Internationally Trained Physicians. HB 598 authorizes the Board of Physicians to issue a time-limited license, not to exceed three years and not renewable, to an internationally trained physician under certain circumstances as determined by the Board of Physicians to set minimum qualification and fees for the issuance of licenses, can revoke issued licenses for a number of reasons, and provide a pathway to full licensure after the licensee successfully satisfies any license conditions established by the Board of Physicians.

The Department supports the intent of HB 598 and supports the Board of Physicians' submitted amendments to HB 598. Licensure of internationally trained physicians is an important avenue to enhance access to health care services and address the physician shortage in Maryland. Licensure of these physicians who meet the Board of Physicians' requirements would help alleviate workforce shortages, particularly in designated Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs). HPSAs are areas that have been federally designated as having a lack of providers. Maryland has a total of 57 primary care HPSAs, and 49 mental health HPSAs. Increasing the number of qualified physicians practicing in Maryland would improve access to care and reduce health disparities, especially in underserved and vulnerable communities.

Licensure of internationally trained physicians who meet the Board of Physician's requirements would lower barriers to the recruitment and licensure of these physicians and contribute to closing the gap, strengthen the health care workforce, and improve access to care across Maryland. The Department supports the amendments from the Board of Physicians and looks forward to ongoing collaboration with stakeholders to ensure Maryland is competitive in attracting these internationally trained physicians.

If you have any further questions, please contact Meghan Lynch, Director of Governmental Affairs at meghan.lynch@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D
Secretary of Health