



Wes Moore | Governor

Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor

Carmel Roques | Secretary

Date: March 3, 2026

Bill Number: HB 1414

Bill Title: Nursing Homes - Direct Care Wages and Benefits and Cost Reports

Committee: House Health Committee

MDOA Position: Information

Madam Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this informational testimony on HB 1414. This bill would require nursing homes to expend at least 75% of total nursing and residential care revenue on direct care wages and benefits, and to annually file detailed cost reports to the Maryland Department of Health beginning September 1, 2027. Recent data show that Maryland direct care workers earn a median hourly wage of about \$16.38 and typically take home less than \$32,000 annually, with a significant share living in low-income households. Nationally and in Maryland, low wages and limited benefits are primary factors driving high turnover in nursing homes, with annual turnover rates exceeding 100% in many facilities. Nursing home direct care jobs are disproportionately held by women (approximately 95% of direct care staff in Maryland are women) and people of color (nearly 80%). These conditions not only affect workers' economic security but also undermine the quality and continuity of care that older Marylanders depend on daily.

MDOA agrees that improving the quality of direct care careers, and worker retention is a priority. A strong care workforce is vital not only for quality long-term services but also for enabling older adults to age in place and maintain health and social participation across the lifespan, which can reduce reliance on institutional care and support broader economic resilience. MDOA is deferential to the fiscal and operational impacts shared by the Maryland Department of Health that HB 1414 would create. In light of current projected general fund deficits in fiscal 2027 and beyond, MDOA urges caution in passing legislation that significantly increases expenditures without commensurate decreases in other areas. Thank you for your consideration.