



Statement of Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA)

To the House Health Committee
Chair: Delegate Heather Bagnall
February 16, 2026

House Bill 0598: Physicians - Licensing - Internationally Trained Physicians

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and members of the Committee, the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) is in SUPPORT of House Bill 0598: Physicians - Licensing - Internationally Trained Physicians.

The MRHA supports HB 0598, which authorizes the State Board of Physicians to issue a 3-year license to practice medicine to an internationally trained physician who meets certain requirements. The bill also authorizes the Board to provide a pathway to full licensure after completion of license requirements.

Providing a new pathway for internationally trained physicians to practice in the state of Maryland would help address the provider workforce shortage in the state, particularly in rural areas that face a primary care physician shortage. This encourages retention of physicians in the state post-provisional licensure, bolstering Maryland's physician workforce in the long term.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, 45.6% of internationally trained physicians supported rural patients.¹ In rural areas that are health professional shortage areas, internationally trained physicians play a key role in increasing access to health care for patients. This bill would formalize the licensure process and provide a pathway for physicians to become fully licensed in the state after a provisional period.

MRHA believes this legislation is important to support our rural communities and we urge you to support its passage.

With appreciation,
The Maryland Rural Health Association

1. Sabet CJ, Khalif M, Hoan N, Kureshi S. Supporting International Medical Graduate Workforce Integration in the 2024 US Election. *Fam Med*. 2024;56(10):617-619. <https://doi.org/10.22454/FamMed.2024.706876>.