



MedStar Health

9 State Circle, Ste. 303
Annapolis, MD 21401
C 410-916-7817
kimberly.routson@medstar.net

Kimberly S. Routson
Assistant Vice President
Government Affairs - Maryland

HB 598 – Physicians – Licensing – Internationally Trained Physicians

Position: ***Support***

House Health Committee

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MedStar Health is the largest healthcare provider in the Maryland and Washington, D.C. region. MedStar Health offers a comprehensive spectrum of clinical services through over 500 care locations, including 10 hospitals, 33 urgent care clinics, ambulatory care centers, and an extensive array of primary and specialty care providers. As a not-for-profit healthcare system, MedStar Health is committed to its patient-first philosophy, emphasizing care, compassion, and clinical excellence, supported by a dedicated team of more than 35,000 physicians, nurses, and many other clinical and non-clinical associates.

For MedStar Health and the communities we serve, workforce shortages are of significant concern, directly affecting the delivery of high-quality patient care. Physician supply is projected to fall behind patient demand both nationally and across Maryland, resulting in longer wait times and reduced access to health care providers. These shortages are driven by an aging population and workforce, licensure barriers, and increasing rates of physician burnout, and they are projected to grow substantially without targeted interventions.

According to the Health Resources and Services Administration, the United States is projected to face a shortage of up to 141,160 full-time physicians by 2038. To address these challenges, MedStar Health alternative pathways and creative strategies to sustain health care delivery and ensure patients continue to receive timely, high-quality care.

Under current Maryland law, internationally trained physicians seeking licensure must meet specific criteria, including completion of a two-year postgraduate medical education program accredited by an organization recognized by the Maryland Board of Physicians (MBP). These narrow requirements can create procedural and timing barriers that delay otherwise qualified physicians from practicing in the state.

HB 598 seeks to expand licensure pathways for internationally trained physicians. The bill authorizes the MBP to issue three-year licenses, and to accept two-year programs equivalent to those accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). By improving licensure pathways for internationally trained physicians, this legislation advances long-term continuity of health care services.

MedStar Health remains committed to employing solutions to address workforce shortages and ensure continued access to high-quality care within the communities we serve. By reducing licensure barriers for internationally trained physicians, HB 598 will strengthen the state's capacity to recruit and retain physicians and help mitigate the progression of workforce shortages.

For the reasons above, MedStar Health urges a ***favorable*** report on **HB 598**.

It's how we treat people.