



HB 1558 - State Board of Physicians – Anesthesiologist Assistants – Licensing

Position: ***Favorable***

House Health Committee

March 18, 2026

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 dedicated 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.

HB 1558 establishes licensure for Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants (CAAs) under the State Board of Physicians. Creating a formal licensure and regulatory framework improves patient safety, clarifies professional standards, and ensures proper oversight and accountability within the anesthesia care team. CAAs are highly educated and thoroughly trained professionals who work under the supervision of physician anesthesiologists and serve as essential members of a coordinated, physician-led anesthesia team alongside CRNAs.

Maryland continues to face workforce shortages that hinder hospitals' ability to fully staff anesthesia care teams and meet the rising demand for surgeries and procedures. MedStar Health currently has open anesthesia positions that cannot be filled by the existing in-state workforce. At the same time, many CAAs live in Maryland but cannot practice there due to a lack of licensure authority. Additionally, the Washington, D.C.-based educational pipeline produces highly qualified clinicians, many of whom are from the region and wish to stay here to work. Without licensure, Maryland loses these trained professionals to neighboring jurisdictions. MedStar Health care sites in Washington, D.C., have successfully incorporated CAAs into care teams for over a decade, employing nearly 100 CAAs who contribute meaningfully to patient care. Increasingly, Maryland residents trained as CAAs are leaving to practice in D.C. and Virginia, which authorized CAAs last year.

HB 1558 emphasizes workforce retention and increasing capacity, not displacing workers. CAAs support the anesthesia care team under physician supervision and improve access to timely, high-quality surgical services. Since both the District of Columbia and Virginia authorize CAA practice, Maryland hospitals face a competitive disadvantage in recruiting and keeping qualified anesthesia professionals.

HB 1558 modernizes Maryland's healthcare workforce system, boosts regional competitiveness, and maintains a trained pipeline of clinicians dedicated to serving Maryland patients.

For the reasons above, MedStar Health urges a ***favorable*** report on **HB 1558**.