



Maryland
Hospital Association

February 21, 2024

To: The Honorable C.T. Wilson, Chair, House Economic Matters Committee

Re: Letter of Support- House Bill 650- Labor and Employment- Apprenticeship Standards – Ratio of Apprentices to Journeypersons

Dear Chair Wilson:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on House Bill 650.

Maryland hospitals continue to experience workforce shortages. Registered Nurses (RN)s, Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), and nursing assistants make up 59% of the hospital workforce. The latest data show the positions with the highest vacancy rates in Maryland hospitals are:

- Surgical technicians, 17.8%
- Licensed practical nurses (LPN), 16.8%
- Nurse practitioners, 12.3%
- Registered nurses (RN), 12.1%

A 2022 [GlobalData](#) report estimates a statewide shortage of 5,000 full-time registered nurses and 4,000 licensed practical nurses. Without intervention, shortages could double or even triple by 2035. MHA's [2022 State of Maryland's Health Care Workforce report](#) outlines a roadmap to ensure Maryland has the health care workforce it needs now and into the future. One recommendation is to remove barriers to education to expand and grow a diverse and talented workforce. States across the country are investing in earn as you learn programs and apprenticeships to help curb the health care workforce shortages.

Many of the hospital positions with the highest vacancies require one or two year degrees or a certification. Maryland's community colleges have stepped up to help the health care field by creating additional pathways for accessing health care education. For example, Howard County Community College partnered with several hospitals to launch [apprenticeships for licensed practical nurses and surgical technicians](#).¹

House Bill 650 is a step in the right direction for supporting the health care field and others as more "non-traditional" occupations adopt the apprenticeship model. This bill increases the ratio of apprentices to journeymen. This will provide more flexibility for occupations with different

¹ Business Monthly. "[HCC Partners with Hospitals on Apprenticeship Programs](#)." (Dec. 1, 2022).



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models of supervision. This flexibility will pave the way for the adoption of more apprenticeships in “non-traditional” occupations including in health care.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on HB 650.

For more information, please contact:
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