



Maryland
Hospital Association

**House Bill 602-
State Board of Nursing - Advanced Practice Nursing Licensure and Specialty Certification
- Reciprocity Discussions (Maryland Border States Advanced Practice Nursing Act)**

Position: *Support*

February 25, 2025

House Health & Government Operations Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 602.

Maryland hospitals continue to face challenges retaining and building the health care workforce. Based on data from Q3 2024, nurse practitioners have a 16% vacancy rate in Maryland hospitals. Advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) are an important component of the health care workforce, especially in Maryland where they have full practice authority.

Under the Governor's executive orders during the COVID-19 public health emergency, Maryland hospitals seamlessly recruited providers with active out-of-state licenses to care for Marylanders. These individuals were essential to fill critical workforce gaps, particularly among advanced practice nurses like nurse practitioners. Many hospitals, especially those near border states, frequently hired nurse practitioners to support critical care units.

When the state public health emergency expired, so did the ability for nurse practitioners to work in state using an active out-of-state license. The Board of Nursing allowed an emergency exception, which permitted interstate reciprocity for registered nurses (RN) and licensed practical nurses (LPN) without a compact license. Advanced practice registered nurses were not included.

MHA supported legislation in 2024 to allow Maryland to enter the APRN licensure compact. Since this legislation did not pass, the ability to establish reciprocity agreements with border states would be beneficial. The Maryland Board of Physicians was able to create [reciprocity agreements](#) with Washington D.C., and Virginia. This likely took a great deal of the Board's administrative resources. If the Board of Nursing was properly supported and resourced to create these reciprocity agreements, HB 602 could help remove barriers to licensure for APRNs.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on HB 602.

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