



Maryland
Hospital Association

House Bill 377- Parity With Other Health Care Practitioners (Physician Assistant Parity Act of 2026)

Position: *Support*
February 4, 2026
House Health 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 377.

Physician assistants (PA) are essential members of Maryland's health care workforce, particularly as hospitals and health systems face clinician shortages and rising costs to recruit and retain physicians. Advanced practice providers, like PAs and nurse practitioners, help ensure access to care, especially in rural and underserved areas as well as community settings like urgent care centers and primary care offices.

In 2024, the Maryland General Assembly passed SB 167/HB 806, which modernized the practice and licensure of PAs in Maryland. PAs now practice under a "collaboration agreement" rather than a "delegation agreement." This change allows PAs to practice at the top of their scope as a collaborating provider, not just a physician extender, while also eliminating some administrative burdens.

HB 377 would clarify the role physician assistants play in other parts of statute to align with the goals of the 2024 legislation. For example, the bill allows PAs to evaluate and make a recommendation on whether a patient can make informed medical decisions and to serve as the second signature to sign off on a voluntary and involuntary mental health admission for a minor or disabled adult. Given ongoing workforce challenges and growing demand for health care across the state, all providers must work at the top of their scope. The actions permitted within HB 377 align with a PA's training and education.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on HB 377.

For more information, please contact:
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