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Budget and Taxation Committee

Health and Human Services
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Testimony for Senate Bill 262

Department of Information Technology - Study of a Common Information Technology Platform
for Health Occupations Boards

January 19, 2021

Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 262: Department of Information Technology - Study of a Common Information Technology Platform for Health Occupations Boards.

The 20 health occupations boards throughout Maryland currently use different licensing and information technology (IT) platforms. DLS has identified these systems as outdated, inefficient, and unable to meet the level of service needed. Many of the current systems have potential vulnerabilities, such as lack of cybersecurity protections and insufficient back up. In addition, boards must pay many different providers to maintain each individual system.

Senate Bill 262 requires the Department of Information Technology (DoIT), *in consultation with health occupations board*, to:

1. Review the information technology platforms used by each health occupations board, including the administrative functions and cost of operating the platforms.
2. Make recommendations on the feasibility and cost of developing a common IT platform for use by each board that would standardize the websites and administrative functions of the boards and will make available accurate licensing information on health care providers for the purpose of facilitating network adequacy.
3. Submit its findings and recommendations to the Senate Education, Health, and Environment Affairs and the House Health and Government Operations Committees by December 1, 2021.

Currently, smaller boards do not have the resources to facilitate IT upgrades. A common, robust licensing system has great potential and will give boards the ability to better communicate and prove transparency. Senate Bill 262 also requires that DoIT assess:

1. Adopting a standardized website appearance and functionality for all boards.
2. The ability of each board to send automatic newsletters or notices to licenses or persons who request receiving notices from the board.
3. A uniform translation service for the website.
4. A standardized method of presenting information to interested parties and licensees on licensing certifications, meeting schedules and agendas, contact information for board membership and staff, and public notices and complaint processing.

Senate Bill 262 will give us the information necessary to work with our health occupation boards to improve service to customers . In addition, the COVID-19 Pandemic has demonstrated the need for a common, robust IT platform across health occupation boards. As we struggle to meet the logistical challenges of healthcare delivery, a common IT platform will be a valuable tool. Thank you for your consideration and I respectfully ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 262.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Addie C. Eckardt".

Senator Addie C. Eckardt