



6811 Campfield Road
Baltimore, MD 21207

TO: The Honorable Delores Kelley
Chairwoman, Finance Committee

FROM: LeadingAge Maryland

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 894, Post-Crisis Jobs Act of 2021

DATE: March 17, 2021

POSITION: Favorable with Amendments

LeadingAge Maryland writes to request a favorable with amendments report on Senate Bill 894.

LeadingAge Maryland is a community of not-for-profit aging services organizations serving residents and clients through continuing care retirement communities, affordable senior housing, assisted living, nursing homes and home and community-based services. We represent more than 120 not-for-profit organizations, including the vast majority of CCRCs in Maryland. Our mission is to expand the world of possibilities for aging in Maryland. We partner with consumers, caregivers, researchers, faith communities and others who care about aging in Maryland.

Senate Bill 894 authorizes applicants to complete education or training requirements through a digital learning program. This bill requires the Governor, for fiscal years 2023 through 2025, to allocate 75% of any increase in total State operating funds for community colleges for workforce training. Senate Bill 894 establishes the Digital Learning Conversion Grant Program, the Basic Numeracy and Literacy Skills Grant Program, and the Recruitment of High Growth Industries Workers Grant Program.

LeadingAge Maryland supports Senate Bill 894 but given the need for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) in the industry and action by the federal government, we request an

amendment. As a result of COVID-19, the federal government approved an eight-hour online emergency training program for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs). Nursing homes in Maryland share the same struggles as nursing homes throughout the country with staff turnover and recruitment. A study issued by U.S. PIRG last month showed that shortages were worst among nursing aides, affecting 20.6% of U.S. nursing homes in December, up from 17.4% in May. Nursing homes in Maryland must have all the tools available to recruit, train, and retain CNAs during the ongoing pandemic and beyond.

Consistent with the federal government and to address the needs of the industry, LeadingAge Maryland requests a favorable report with the attached amendment on Senate Bill 894.

For additional information, please contact Aaron J. Greenfield, 410.446.1992

LeadingAge Maryland
Proposed Amendment

Amendment No. 1

On page 4, after line 24, insert the following:

(D) THE BOARD OF NURSING SHALL APPROVE AN APPLICANT FOR A LICENSE, A CERTIFICATION, RENEWAL OR ANY OTHER AUTHORIZATION ISSUED UNDER THIS ARTICLE TO PRACTICE AS A CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT AS DEFINED BY § 8-6A-01(J) OF THIS ARTICLE THAT COMPLETES THE EDUCATION OR TRAINING REQUIRED TO QUALIFY FOR THE AUTHORIZATION THROUGH A DIGITAL LEARNING PROGRAM.

(I) A CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT AS DEFINED BY § 8-6A-01(J) OF THIS ARTICLE MAY COMPLETE A DIGITAL LEARNING PROGRAM IN CONSULTATION WITH THE BOARD OF NURSING.

(II) THE DIGITAL LEARNING PROGRAM MUST CONSIST OF A MINIMUM OF 8 HOURS OF EDUCATION AND MUST INCLUDE TRAINING IN THE FOLLOWING CONTENT AREAS:

- (a) RESIDENTS' RIGHTS;
- (b) CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESIDENTS' PERSONAL INFORMATION AND MEDICAL RECORDS;
- (c) CONTROL OF CONTAGIOUS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES;
- (d) EMERGENCY RESPONSE MEASURES;
- (e) ASSISTANCE WITH ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING;
- (f) MEASURING VITAL SIGNS;
- (g) SKIN CARE AND PRESSURE SORES PREVENTION;
- (h) PORTABLE OXYGEN USE AND SAFETY;
- (i) NUTRITION AND HYDRATION; AND
- (j) DEMENTIA CARE

(E) AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS BEEN PRACTICING AS A CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT AS DEFINED BY § 8-6A-01(J) OF THIS ARTICLE THAT IS IN GOOD STANDING WITH THE BOARD OF NURSING AND HAS BEEN PRACTICING FOR AT LEAST 180 DAYS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC SHALL:

(1) BE PERMITTED TO CONTINUE TO PRACTICE AS A CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT, AND

(2) BE PERMITTED TO SEEK CERTIFICATION AS A GERIATRIC NURSING ASSISTANT UNDER SUBSECTION (F).

(F) IN ORDER TO PERFORM THE DUTIES OF A GERIATRIC NURSING ASSISTANT, A CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT AS DEFINED BY § 8-6A-01(J) OF THIS ARTICLE MUST SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR GERIATRIC NURSING ASSISTANT MANDATED UNDER THE REGULATIONS OF THE BOARD OF NURSING.