



Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill Number: House Bill 836

Title: COVID–19 Testing, Contact Tracing, and Vaccination Act of 2021

Hearing Date: February 23, 2021

Position: Support with Technical Amendment

The Maryland Nurses Association (MNA) supports *House Bill 836- COVID-19 Testing, Contract Tracing, and Vaccination Act*. The bill delineates requirements for a robust COVID-19 response. MNA requests one minor technical amendment.

In the midst of the pandemic, nurses were called upon and put years of education and training into action. This experiences has changed health care forever; and the past 12-months will help guide us in ongoing efforts to end the pandemic and plan for future public health emergencies. This legislation supports planning efforts by focusing on a three-pronged approaching to addressing the pandemic: testing, contact tracking and vaccinations.

We support the creation of the Maryland Public Health Job Corps. This provision will help infuse needed personnel into Maryland’s response. By utilizing trusted members of the community, such as community health workers, the Maryland Public Health Jobs Corps will advance community buy-in of COVID testing and vaccination efforts. As we understand the intention of the bill, the participants in the program will assist in the coordination of COVID testing and vaccination. However, the bill language itself indicates that community health workers and other non-clinical personnel could directly provide testing and vaccination. This provision conflicts with Health Occupations article which generally reserves clinical function to certain licensed or certified providers. To address this issue, we suggest the following technical amendment:

On page 5 in line 20, strike “PROVIDING OR”; and in line 22 insert after “OR PROVIDE CONTACT TRACING” after “TRACING”

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.