



Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Bill: Senate Bill 440 – Commission to Study the Health Care Workforce Crisis in Maryland - Establishment

Hearing Date: February 10, 2022

Position: Support with Amendments

The Maryland Affiliate of the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) support with amendments *Senate Bill 440 – Commission to Study the Health Care Workforce Crisis in Maryland – Establishment*. The bill creates a commission to guide Maryland’s next steps in addressing health care workforce shortages, which have reached a crisis level during the pandemic.

We think the legislation’s approach makes sense. The issue is too complex to solve quickly within this legislative session. We have listed several suggested amendments below to provide further focus of the Commission’s work. If we can provide any assistance throughout the Committee’s review of this legislation, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

Amendment 1: Include health professionals in the discussions

On page 2 in line 21, change “may” to “shall”

Explanation: ACNM believes the participation of health care professionals and their associations will enhance the quality of the Commission’s findings as well as increase buy-in from the broader health care community.

Amendment 2: Including birthing centers as a shortage area

On page 2 in line 29, add “birthing centers” after “nursing homes”.

Explanation: One of Maryland’s top public health priorities is to reduce maternal mortality and decrease health disparities in maternal and infant health. Birthing centers are an important setting to consider when evaluating shortages.

Amendment 3: Reword language regarding clinical requirements

On page 3 in lines 21-22, strike “barriers posed by clinical requirements” and replace with “options to enhance opportunities for clinical placements and trainings to allow students to gain sufficient supervised clinical experience.”

Explanation: Nurse-midwives believe supervised clinical education is the backbone of clinical education rather than a “barrier”. We think the provision intended to imply that the lack of clinical placements has been creating a barrier for students to complete their clinical education.

Amendment 4: Secretary’s authority over the boards

On page 4, we ask for line 12 to be removed in its entirety. This provision says “what authority the Secretary should have over the boards.” We do not believe this Commission is the appropriate body for that discussion.