



Board of Dental Examiners

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

Arpana S. Verma Board Chair – Francis X. McLaughlin, Jr., Executive Director

55 Wade Avenue/Tulip Drive Catonsville, MD 21228 Phone: 410-402-8501; Email: mdh.mddentalboard@maryland.gov

March 3, 2022

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB 1130 – Health Occupations – Prohibition on Expiration of Licenses, Certificates, Permits, and Registrations – Letter of Concern

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Committee Members:

The Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners (the Board) is submitting this letter of concern for House Bill (HB) 1130 - Health Occupations – Prohibition on Expiration of Licenses, Certificates, Permits, and Registrations.

While the Board supports the bill's intent to assist the Health Occupations boards with the restoration and implementation of the Maryland Department of Health's (MDH) network systems, the Board is currently not experiencing a backlog or any problems in issuing or renewing licenses. Thus, the bill's broad nature in including this Board may lead to undue confusion.

Specifically, the Board utilizes a cloud-based licensing platform, and this platform was largely unaffected by the December 4, 2021 ransomware attack on MDH's servers. The renewal period for Dental Radiation Technologists began on January 1, 2022, and we are proud to share that we are not experiencing any major issues. Furthermore, the platform vendor was quick to assist the Board with any minor issues that the Board faced issuing and renewing licenses. We do not anticipate any issues at all once the renewal period for dentists begins later this year.

Since the Board is currently functioning at or near full capacity, allowing licensees or certificate-holders to practice on expired licenses is not necessary at this time. We are not aware of any issues that will prevent any individual licensed or permitted by the Board from renewing those licenses. As stated above, any issues that were brought to our attention were quickly handled by either our Board staff or by the licensing platform vendor.

Considering the foregoing, the Board believes that extending expiration dates would only cause confusion at this point. Moreover, the Board is concerned that licensees may either misinterpret or abuse this emergency bill, using it as an excuse to not renew on time. Therefore, for the reasons stated, the Board urges an unfavorable report on HB1130.

I hope that this information is helpful. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact me at (240) 498-8159, arpana.singhverma@maryland.gov, or Dr. Edwin Morris, the Dental Board's Legislative Committee Chair at (410) 218-4203. In addition, the Board's Executive Director, Mr. Frank McLaughlin may be reached at (443) 878-5253, frank.mclaughlin@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arpana s.Verma', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Arpana s.Verma, D.D.S. Board President

The opinion of the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners expressed in this letter of concern does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.