



Maryland
Hospital Association

February 2, 2023

To: The Honorable Melony G. Griffith, Chair, Senate Finance Committee

Re: Letter of Support- Senate Bill 104- Labor and Employment - Apprenticeships and Representation on the Apprenticeship and Training Council

Dear Chair Griffith:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of Senate Bill 104.

Maryland hospitals are facing the most critical staffing shortage in recent memory. A 2022 [GlobalData](#) report estimates a statewide shortage of 5,000 full-time registered nurses and 4,000 licensed practical nurses. Without intervention, shortages could double or even triple by 2035. MHA's [2022 State of Maryland's Health Care Workforce report](#) outlines a roadmap to ensure Maryland has the health care workforce it needs now and into the future. The recommendations focus on four areas: expand Maryland's workforce pipeline, remove barriers to health care education, retain the health care workforce and leverage talent with new care models.

Senate Bill 104 seeks to expand the representation of the Apprenticeship and Training Council to specifically include Black and Latino individuals. Diversity among health care providers can improve access to care, health outcomes and reduce disparities. This legislation also creates the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission to reduce shortages in high demand occupations and provide career pathways. These goals align with the recommendations of MHA's Task Force on Maryland's Future Health Workforce to create programs that provide incentives to pursue careers in high demand health care roles.

Hospital data show high vacancy rates for licensed practical nurses, respiratory therapists, registered nurses and surgical technicians. One in five or 18.9% of nursing assistant positions are currently vacant.¹ As the [Maryland Department of Labor's Healthcare Apprenticeship Workgroup](#) explored during the interim, there are opportunities to provide more apprenticeships in health care. MHA looks forward to engaging in further conversations with the state and other stakeholders to remove barriers for Marylanders interested in working in health care so we can expand and grow a diverse and talented workforce to support the state's current and future needs.

For these reasons, we ask for a *favorable* report on SB 104.

For more information, please contact:

Jane Krienke, Senior Legislative Analyst, Government Affairs
jkrienke@mhaonline.org

¹ MHA Workforce Survey – January 2023