



Maryland
Hospital Association

House Bill 650- Labor and Employment - Apprenticeship Standards - Ratio of Apprentices to Journeypersons

Position: *Support*

February 21, 2024

House Economic Matters Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 650.

Maryland hospitals continue to experience workforce shortages. Registered nurses (RNs), licensed practical nurses (LPNs), and nursing assistants make up 59% of the hospital workforce. The latest data show the positions with the highest vacancy rates in Maryland hospitals are:

- Surgical technicians, 17.8%
- Licensed practical nurses (LPN), 16.8%
- Nurse practitioners, 12.3%
- Registered nurses (RN), 12.1%

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. One recommendation is to remove barriers to education to expand and grow a diverse and talented workforce. States nationwide are investing in earn as you learn programs and apprenticeships to help curb health care workforce shortages.

Many hospital positions with the highest vacancies require one- or two-year degrees or a certification. Maryland community colleges stepped up to help the health care field by creating additional pathways to health care education. For example, Howard County Community College partnered with several hospitals to launch [apprenticeships for licensed practical nurses and surgical technicians](#).¹

House Bill 650 is a step in the right direction to support the health care field and others as more “non-traditional” occupations adopt the apprenticeship model. This bill increases the ratio of apprentices to journeymen. This will provide more flexibility for occupations with different models of supervision. This flexibility will pave the way for more apprenticeships in “non-traditional” occupations, including in health care.

¹ Business Monthly. [“HCC Partners with Hospitals on Apprenticeship Programs.”](#) (Dec. 1, 2022).

For these reasons, we request a *favorable* report on HB 650.

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