

Testimony IN FAVOR of HB 380 - EMS Bill

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My name is Madely Perez-Cruz, and I stand before you today in strong support of Bill HB 380, The EMS Bill. While I may not have been born in this country, the United States has been my home since I was five years old. I am a Nationally Registered EMT who is allowed to serve in other states...but not in Maryland. Current state law bars me from serving our community. HB 380 can help solve this problem and strengthen Emergency Medical Services.

I have been a member of the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad (WVRS) for the past five years. I joined WVRS in my sophomore year of high school to complete the required student service learning hours (SSL). What began as a way to fulfill the required SSL hours quickly evolved into a deep passion for emergency medical services. This passion was sparked by a personal experience – when I was eight, my mother suffered a severe fall. The fall caused a brain bleed, from which she fell into a coma for 12 days. I witnessed the professionalism, kindness, and reassurance of the EMTs that day, and it left a lasting impression on me.

Driven by this memory and a desire to help others, in my sophomore year of high school I pursued EMT training and then actively served as a volunteer EMT for four years. Each call served as an opportunity to gain valuable experience and provide compassionate care to my community. Whether treating minor emergencies or calming the fears of families during a crisis, I approached every patient with the respect and dignity they deserved. I trained extensively,

driven by the knowledge that every call could impact someone's life, just as mine - and my mom's - were impacted.

However, due to my immigration status, I'm currently unable to obtain my Maryland EMT license despite completing all the necessary training and being allowed to serve in other states. This bill, HB 380, proposes a solution: allowing qualified individuals like myself to contribute formally to our state's emergency response system.

This isn't about individual exemptions; it's about expanding the qualified pool of EMS providers in Maryland. We face a growing demand for emergency services, and every trained responder represents a potential life saved. HB 380 doesn't lower standards; it leverages the skills and dedication of individuals who have already chosen to serve their communities. Think of the countless families who rely on timely and effective medical intervention during emergencies. This bill ensures they have access to a broader network of qualified professionals, prepared to respond with compassion and expertise.

I urge you to see this legislation not as a special case, but as an opportunity to strengthen Maryland's emergency response system. By embracing qualified individuals like myself, we can build a more inclusive and effective safety net for all our residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.