



## Maryland Community Health System

**Committee:** House Health and Government Operations Committee

**Bill Number:** House Bill 354 – Maryland Pathway to Nursing Program and Advisory Committee - Establishment

**Hearing Date:** February 6, 2024

**Position:** Support

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Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *House Bill 354 – Maryland Pathway to Nursing Program and Advisory Committee - Establishment*. The program will support nursing students in the earliest part of their educational career, thus increasing their chances of success in graduating and licensure. The program will support licensed practical nursing students in at least two community college nursing programs. This focus will allow nursing students to remain and work in their communities while completing their education.

The Pathways Program is innovative, as it will address the need of nursing students for wrap-around supports including child care and elder care. Many nursing students work more than one job, take care of their families, and pursue their nursing degree. While there are existing programs that support tuition assistance, there are few resources to support the other needs of students.

Nursing programs have attrition rates as high as 50% with even higher rates for non-white students.<sup>1</sup> To increase the retention rates of nursing students, we need a comprehensive approach, as proposed by this legislation. Participants will be provided with wrap-around services such as child and family care, in addition to support for educational expenses.

We ask for a favorable report. We need to start rebuilding the nursing workforce now, and we do not want to delay another year in implementing innovative solutions. If we can provide further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).

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<sup>1</sup> [https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6209&context=gradschool\\_dissertations](https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6209&context=gradschool_dissertations)