



Maryland
Hospital Association

February 25, 2021

To: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair, House Health & Government Operations Committee

Re: Letter of Support - House Bill 1006 - Health Occupations – Service Members, Veterans, and Military Spouses – Temporary Licensure, Certification, and Registration

Dear Chair Pendergrass:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on House Bill 1006.

A highly trained, fully engaged and diverse workforce is essential for Maryland hospitals to deliver the best care and provide a superior experience for patients. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw how essential our health care heroes are. With more than 117,000 statewide—they kept Maryland hopeful and healthy during the height of the crisis and continue to [care for Maryland](#) around-the-clock every day. With the influx of patients, Maryland hospitals relied on retired health care professionals, volunteers, and students to supplement existing staffing.

Maryland hospitals support measures that strengthen our health care workforce. HB 1006 requires health occupation boards to issue an expedited temporary license to service members, veterans, and military spouses who have a valid license, certificate, or registration in good standing issued in another state. Streamlining the licensing process for these health professionals leverages their expertise and could improve access to care, particularly for specialized services.

Hospital leaders strive to ensure future health care needs are met. There are many areas of the state where jobs in critical professions remain unfilled. By 2030, many of the state's 24 jurisdictions are expected to have shortages in primary care, mental health, and addiction practitioners.¹ State law already requires the Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing to expedite the licensure of active military members, veterans, and spouses for a myriad of occupations.^{2,3} HB 1006 complements this courtesy by including health care occupations—one of the most in-demand fields of employment.

For these reasons, we request a *favorable* report on HB 1006.

For more information, please contact:
Jennifer Witten, Vice President, Government Affairs
Jwitten@mhaonline.org

¹ IHS Markit. Maryland Primary Care and Selected Specialty Health Workforce Study

² [§2.5-106 Business Regulation](#)

³ Maryland Department of Labor & Licensing. (n.d.) "[Attention Military Veterans and Families- Learn About Expedited Licensure](#)".