



Maryland
Hospital Association

February 17, 2021

To: The Honorable Dereck E. Davis, Chair, House Economic Matters Committee

Re: Letter of Support - House Bill 653- Joint Committee on Workforce Development

Dear Chair Davis:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on House Bill 653.

A highly trained, fully engaged and diverse workforce is essential for Maryland's 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 108,000 statewide—they kept Maryland hopeful and healthy during the height of the crisis and continue to care for Maryland around-the-clock every day. The state's hospitals and health systems are pillars of their communities and often are the top employers

As the state looks toward a long road to economic recovery, Maryland hospitals are willing and able to support their communities. Statewide, hospitals—either directly or indirectly—account for 8% of all employment. The field is expected to employ 400,000 Marylanders by 2026.¹ Hospital leaders' top priority is 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 providers.²

Maryland's hospitals support HB 653, which would convene a legislative committee to evaluate the state's workforce programs and identify appropriate strategies for expansion. It is important that, as a state, we drive to bolster and appropriately invest in our workforce. **We recommend the committee consult with experts on private workforce development initiatives.** Having input from experts would improve the committee's ability to identify areas for improvement and work toward solutions.

For these reasons, we ask for a *favorable* report on HB 653.

For more information, please contact:
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¹ Maryland Department of Labor, Long Term Industry Projections, 2016-2026

² IHS Markit. Maryland Primary Care and Selected Specialty Health Workforce Study