



The Maryland State Medical Society
1211 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-5516
410.539.0872
Fax: 410.547.0915
1.800.492.1056
www.medchi.org

House Health Committee

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House Bill 598 – *Physicians – Licensing – Internationally Trained Physicians*

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **supports with amendment** House Bill 598.

This legislation establishes a more efficient pathway for physicians who were trained and have practiced abroad for a period of 5 to 7 years to become licensed in Maryland, but importantly it strives to ensure that they are equivalent to physicians who attend school and complete their residency here in the United States. This issue was the subject of a workgroup convened in 2024 at the Legislature’s request by the Maryland Board of Physicians.

At its core, this legislation is an effort to address a burdensome requirement placed on international medical graduates under current Maryland law. Today, an internationally trained physician who has completed postgraduate training (i.e., a residency) in another country would have to complete another two-year residency here in the United States. This is true even if the physician has significant practice experience abroad, and it is that group of physicians which are the focus of this legislation.

Ensuring that the postgraduate training completed abroad is “substantially similar” to that required in the United States is a key component of this bill. The delayed effective date recognizes that the Federation of State Medical Boards, among others, are working to construct a means by which state medical boards can verify that international postgraduate training programs are indeed “substantially similar” to that required of current physicians. As this process develops, the Board will seek to incorporate these checks and balances into our internationally trained physician licensing process.

To that end, MedChi would request that the following uncodified language be added to the bill, to ensure its involvement as this regulatory structure takes shape: “BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, THAT THE BOARD OF PHYSICIANS SHALL REGULARLY CONSULT WITH MEDCHI, THE MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY, ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTING THIS STATUTE.”

For these reasons, MedChi urges support of House Bill 598 with the above amendment.

For more information call:

J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Andrew G. Vetter
Christine K. Krone
410-244-7000