

# HOUSE BILL 611

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EMERGENCY BILL

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CF 3lr2937

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By: **Delegates Kelly and Pena–Melnyk**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2023

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Board of Nursing – Sunset Extension, Licensure Exceptions, and Board**  
3 **Operations and Membership**

4 FOR the purpose of continuing the State Board of Nursing in accordance with the  
5 provisions of the Maryland Program Evaluation Act (sunset law) by extending to a  
6 certain date the termination provisions relating to the statutory and regulatory  
7 authority of the Board; altering the exceptions to the registered nursing and licensed  
8 practical nurse licensure requirements; providing that, for a certain period of time,  
9 the Secretary of Health, rather than the Board, has authority over the infrastructure  
10 operations of the Board, including the authority to employ staff for the Board and  
11 set compensation for certain employees as determined in consultation with the  
12 Secretary of Budget and Management; prohibiting the Board of Nursing Fund from  
13 being used to pay for infrastructure operations for a certain period of time; altering  
14 certain qualifications for the executive director of the Board after the authority of  
15 the Secretary of Health over the Board's infrastructure operations is terminated;  
16 requiring the Board to hire a certain consultant to conduct an independent  
17 evaluation of the Board; requiring that the terms of certain members of the Board  
18 end on certain dates; and generally relating to the State Board of Nursing.

19 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
20 Article – Health Occupations  
21 Section 1–203(b), 8–204(d)(3), 8–205(a)(8), 8–206(e)(1), 8–301(c), 8–6B–30, 8–6C–26,  
22 and 8–802  
23 Annotated Code of Maryland  
24 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

25 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
26 Article – Health Occupations  
27 Section 8–206(a) and 8–301(a) and (b)  
28 Annotated Code of Maryland  
29 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 BY repealing  
2 Article – Health Occupations  
3 Section 8–204(d)  
4 Annotated Code of Maryland  
5 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

6 BY adding to  
7 Article – Health Occupations  
8 Section 8–204(d)  
9 Annotated Code of Maryland  
10 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
12 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

13 **Article – Health Occupations**

14 8–205.

15 (a) In addition to the powers and duties set forth elsewhere in this title, the Board  
16 has the following powers and duties:

17 (8) To submit to the Governor, the Secretary, and, in accordance with §  
18 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly, an annual report that  
19 includes:

20 (i) The following data calculated on a fiscal year basis:

21 1. The number of initial and renewal licenses and certificates  
22 issued;

23 2. The number of positive and negative criminal history  
24 records checks results received;

25 3. The number of individuals denied initial or renewal  
26 licensure or certification due to positive criminal history records checks results;

27 4. The number of individuals denied licensure or certification  
28 due to reasons other than a positive criminal history records check;

29 5. The number of new complaints received;

30 6. The number of complaints carried over from year to year;

31 7. The most common grounds for complaints; [and]

1                                   8.     The number and types of disciplinary actions taken by the  
2 Board; and

3                                   **9.     ANY ADDITIONAL AGGREGATE DATA, IDENTIFIED BY**  
4 **THE BOARD IN CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS, DETERMINED TO BE**  
5 **NECESSARY TO FACILITATE WORKFORCE AND HEALTH PLANNING PURPOSES THAT**  
6 **DOES NOT REFERENCE ANY INDIVIDUAL'S NAME OR OTHER PERSONAL IDENTIFIER;**  
7 **AND**

8                                   (ii)   By analyzing information gathered from renewal applications  
9 submitted under § 8–312 of this title, an evaluation of the State's nursing workforce by  
10 certification level, region, and type of workplace, including hospitals and home health  
11 workers;

12 8–301.

13                               (a)   Except as otherwise provided in this title, an individual shall be licensed by  
14 the Board before the individual may practice registered nursing in this State.

15                               (b)   Except as otherwise provided in this title, an individual shall be licensed by  
16 the Board before the individual may practice licensed practical nursing in this State.

17                               (c)   **[This] SUBSECTIONS (A) AND (B) OF THIS** section **[does] DO** not apply to:

18                                   (1)   A student enrolled in an approved education program while practicing  
19 registered nursing or licensed practical nursing in that program;

20                                   (2)   An individual employed by the federal government to practice  
21 registered nursing or licensed practical nursing while practicing within the scope of that  
22 employment, if the individual is authorized by any state to practice registered nursing or  
23 licensed practical nursing;

24                                   (3)   An individual permitted to practice registered nursing or licensed  
25 practical nursing under rules and regulations adopted by the Board, if the individual:

26                                   (i)   Otherwise has qualified to practice registered nursing or licensed  
27 practical nursing in any other state or country and is in this State temporarily; or

28                                   (ii)   Has an application for a license pending before the Board:

29                                   1.    But has not taken the examination required under this  
30 title;

31                                   2.    Has taken an examination under this title, but the results  
32 of the examination are not yet known; **[or]**

1                   3.     Has taken and passed an examination under this title, but  
2 is waiting for the completion of the criminal history records check; **OR**

3                   4.     **HAS TAKEN AND FAILED AN EXAMINATION REQUIRED**  
4 **UNDER THIS TITLE BUT HAS NOT FAILED THE EXAMINATION MORE THAN ONE TIME**  
5 **WITHIN THE 120-DAY PERIOD IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE SUBMISSION OF THE**  
6 **APPLICATION TO THE BOARD;**

7                   (4)    An individual who provides gratuitous care for friends, domestic  
8 partners, or family members; or

9                   (5)    An individual who responds to a disaster situation in this State to  
10 practice registered nursing or licensed practical nursing, if:

11                   (i)     The individual has an active unencumbered license to practice  
12 registered nursing or licensed practical nursing in another state and the individual is  
13 assigned by:

14                   1.     The American Red Cross; or

15                   2.     A member of the Maryland Emergency Management  
16 Assistance Compact under § 14-803 of the Public Safety Article;

17                   (ii)    The Governor has declared a State of Emergency by Executive  
18 Order or proclamation in accordance with § 3-401 of the State Government Article; and

19                   (iii)  The individual reports to the designated staging area in  
20 accordance with § 14-803(2)(b)(5)(iv) of the Public Safety Article.

21 8-6B-30.

22                   Subject to the evaluation and reestablishment provisions of the Maryland Program  
23 Evaluation Act, and subject to the termination of this title under § 8-802 of this title, this  
24 subtitle and all rules and regulations adopted under this subtitle shall terminate and be of  
25 no effect after July 1, [2023] **2025**.

26 8-6C-26.

27                   Subject to the evaluation and reestablishment provisions of the Maryland Program  
28 Evaluation Act, and subject to the termination of this subtitle under § 8-802 of this title,  
29 this subtitle and all regulations adopted under this subtitle shall terminate and be of no  
30 effect after July 1, [2023] **2025**.

31 8-802.

1 Subject to the evaluation and reestablishment provisions of the Program Evaluation  
2 Act, the provisions of this title and of any rule or regulation adopted under this title shall  
3 terminate and be of no effect after July 1, [2023] **2025**.

4 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read  
5 as follows:

6 **Article – Health Occupations**

7 1–203.

8 (b) (1) (I) IN THIS SUBSECTION, “INFRASTRUCTURE OPERATIONS”  
9 MEANS THE ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES OF A BOARD OR COMMISSION  
10 ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS ARTICLE, INCLUDING TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR THE  
11 USE AND SUPPORT OF DELIBERATIVE ACTIONS.

12 (II) “INFRASTRUCTURE OPERATIONS” DOES NOT INCLUDE  
13 LICENSING, INVESTIGATION, OR DISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES.

14 (2) [The] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS  
15 SUBSECTION, THE power of the Secretary to transfer staff or functions of units in the  
16 Department does not apply to any staff of a board or commission, established under this  
17 article, or to any functions that pertain to licensing, disciplinary, or enforcement authority,  
18 or to any other authority specifically delegated by law to a board or commission.

19 (3) THE SECRETARY HAS AUTHORITY OVER THE INFRASTRUCTURE  
20 OPERATIONS OF THE STATE BOARD OF NURSING ESTABLISHED UNDER TITLE 8 OF  
21 THIS ARTICLE.

22 8–204.

23 [(d) The Board may:

24 (1) Employ a staff in accordance with the State budget;

25 (2) Define the duties of its staff; and

26 (3) Employ:

27 (i) An executive director who shall be a registered nurse with a  
28 minimum of a master’s degree in nursing or the equivalent, in the judgment of the Board,  
29 in professional education and administrative experience; and

30 (ii) A deputy director who shall assume the duties and authority of  
31 the executive director in the absence of the executive director.]

1           **(D) (1) (I) THE SECRETARY MAY EMPLOY A STAFF FOR THE BOARD IN**  
2 **ACCORDANCE WITH THE STATE BUDGET.**

3                           **(II) THE SECRETARY MAY DESIGNATE ONE OF THE STAFF AS AN**  
4 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.**

5                           **(2) THE SECRETARY MAY SET THE COMPENSATION OF AN EMPLOYEE**  
6 **OF THE BOARD IN A POSITION THAT:**

7                           **(I) IS UNIQUE TO THE BOARD;**

8                           **(II) REQUIRES SPECIFIC SKILLS OR EXPERIENCE TO PERFORM**  
9 **THE DUTIES OF THE POSITION; AND**

10                           **(III) DOES NOT REQUIRE THE EMPLOYEE TO PERFORM**  
11 **FUNCTIONS THAT ARE COMPARABLE TO FUNCTIONS PERFORMED IN OTHER UNITS**  
12 **OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF STATE GOVERNMENT.**

13                           **(3) THE SECRETARY OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT, IN**  
14 **CONSULTATION WITH THE SECRETARY, SHALL DETERMINE THE POSITIONS FOR**  
15 **WHICH THE SECRETARY MAY SET COMPENSATION UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS**  
16 **SUBSECTION.**

17 8–206.

18           (a) There is a Board of Nursing Fund.

19           (e) (1) **(I)** The Board of Nursing Fund shall be used exclusively to cover the  
20 actual documented direct and indirect costs of fulfilling the statutory and regulatory duties  
21 of the Board as provided by the provisions of this title.

22                           **(II) THE BOARD OF NURSING FUND MAY NOT BE USED TO PAY**  
23 **FOR INFRASTRUCTURE OPERATIONS, AS DEFINED IN § 1–203(B) OF THIS ARTICLE.**

24           SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read  
25 as follows:

26   **Article – Health Occupations**

27 8–204.

28           (d) The Board may:

29                           (3) Employ:

1 (i) An executive director [who shall be a registered nurse with a  
2 minimum of a master's degree in nursing or the equivalent, in the judgment of the Board,  
3 in professional education and administrative experience]; and

4 (ii) A deputy director who shall assume the duties and authority of  
5 the executive director in the absence of the executive director.

6 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

7 (a) In this section, "Board" means the State Board of Nursing.

8 (b) Subject to subsection (c) of this section, the Board shall hire an external  
9 consultant to conduct an independent evaluation of the Board to develop an action plan to  
10 implement the recommendations identified in the report the Board submitted as required  
11 by the Fiscal 2022 Joint Chairmen's Report.

12 (c) The action plan required under subsection (b) of this section shall be developed  
13 in partnership with the Department of Budget and Management, the Maryland  
14 Department of Health, and the Department of Information Technology, and shall include:

15 (1) a gap analysis to address the Board's immediate infrastructure needs  
16 and to identify resources needed for the Board's long-term sustainability and a plan to fill  
17 all Board staff vacancies and process personnel actions;

18 (2) the identification of new workflows to reduce the time to fill Board staff  
19 vacancies;

20 (3) a plan to hire additional nurse and nonnurse investigators to ensure  
21 timely processing of complaints submitted to the Board;

22 (4) an update of the organizational structure of the Board to make  
23 leadership more effective and the provision of the new organizational chart to Board staff  
24 and members and the Maryland Department of Health;

25 (5) a plan to create and staff a new Office of Compliance to implement  
26 relevant recommendations to ensure ongoing adherence to State and national standards;

27 (6) a plan to create and staff a Communications Department within the  
28 Operations Division to relieve operational staff of duties related to constituent  
29 communication and provide responsive service, improve public perception of the Board, and  
30 upgrade social media interaction;

31 (7) strategic goals established in collaboration with the Board President  
32 and Executive Director; and

33 (8) a review of the Board's fee structure and rates and a comparison of the  
34 fees and rates with neighboring states.

1 (d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Board may use funds from  
2 the Board of Nursing Fund to cover the cost of the independent evaluation required under  
3 subsection (b) of this section.

4 (e) (1) On or before September 1, 2023, the external consultant hired under  
5 this section shall report its findings and the action plan developed under this section to the  
6 Senate Finance Committee and the House Health and Government Operations Committee  
7 in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article.

8 (2) The report submitted under paragraph (1) of this subsection may serve  
9 as the basis for additional recommendations made by the Office of Program Evaluation and  
10 Government Accountability as part of the performance evaluation of the Board directed by  
11 the Executive Director of the Department of Legislative Services on January 3, 2023.

12 (f) On or before December 1, 2023, the Board shall report to the Governor and, in  
13 accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the Senate Finance Committee  
14 and the House Health and Government Operations Committee on average processing times  
15 for fiscal year 2023 for:

16 (1) issuing initial licenses, certifications, and renewals, as measured from  
17 the date the applicant passed the NCLEX, if applicable, or from the date the initial  
18 application was submitted, as opposed to the date the completed application was submitted;

19 (2) the issuance of authorization to test; and

20 (3) the approval of proposed nursing curriculum revisions, new nursing  
21 education programs, new certified nursing assistant education programs, new faculty, and  
22 new clinical sites.

23 SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

24 (a) The terms of the members of the State Board of Nursing who are in office on  
25 the effective date of this Act shall end as follows:

26 (1) the terms of five members shall end on July 1, 2023;

27 (2) the terms of five members shall end on October 1, 2023; and

28 (3) the terms of four members shall end on January 1, 2024.

29 (b) (1) Subject to the provisions of § 8–202 of the Health Occupations Article,  
30 a member of the Board whose term ends under subsection (a) of this section may apply for  
31 reappointment.



1           (2)    The appointment of a member under § 8–202(b)(8) of the Health  
2 Occupations Article who is appointed by the Governor is subject to the advice and consent  
3 of the Senate during the legislative session immediately following the date of appointment.

4           (3)    (i)     Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, a  
5 member of the Board who was appointed to fill a vacancy created under subsection (a) of  
6 this section shall serve for the remainder of the term.

7                   (ii)    If a member who applies for reappointment under paragraph (1)  
8 of this subsection is reappointed, the member shall be considered appointed on the date of  
9 the member’s initial appointment and is subject to the requirements of § 8–202(i) of the  
10 Health Occupations Article.

11           SECTION 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 3 of this Act shall take  
12 effect July 1, 2025.

13           SECTION 7. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, except as provided in Section  
14 6 of this Act, this Act is an emergency measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation  
15 of the public health or safety, has been passed by a yea and nay vote supported by  
16 three–fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly,  
17 and shall take effect from the date it is enacted. Section 2 of this Act shall remain effective  
18 through June 30, 2025, and, at the end of June 30, 2025, Section 2 of this Act, with no  
19 further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force  
20 and effect.