

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I offer my testimony in favor of HB 1171.

The United States is a free country and our Constitution protects our freedom. Elected officials take an oath to uphold articles of both the Maryland and United States Constitutions giving its citizens the right choose!

This bill seeks to protect Maryland employees from termination if they decline Covid-19 vaccination. This is particularly important for Covid-19 vaccines, which have not undergone animal testing or rigorous human trials. Covid-19 vaccines are currently administered under FDA Emergency Use Authorization, which does not legally allow any requirement or mandate; yet many Maryland residents are being compelled by employers to take Covid-19 vaccines.

This protection is particularly important to establish for Covid-19 vaccination, given that Maryland has been operating under a State of Emergency for nearly a year despite remarkably high survival rates for Covid-19 and no collapse or lapse in availability of critical care for Covid-19 patients. Network news coverage of the pandemic and policies being implemented across the state and the country indicate a strong likelihood of efforts to mandate Covid-19 vaccination, which would be an ineffective and inappropriate response to the pandemic.

In particular, there is no compelling or comprehensive evidence that any Covid-19 vaccine currently authorized for use prevents infection or transmission of the virus; the vaccines are designed to reduce the severity and virulence of illness if a vaccine recipient is exposed and/or becomes infected. Therefore, mandating Covid-19 vaccination in schools and workplaces is not a reasonable or justified intervention to protect other employees or the public.

No Covid-19 vaccine currently authorized for use has undergone animal tests or rigorous human trials. As of March 5th, 2021, there are 1,517 adverse events associated with U.S. Covid-19 vaccination reported in VAERS. Of those, 1,051 are deaths. This adverse event rate exceeds the rate of influenza vaccine reactions by 20-30 fold; and according to a 2010 Harvard University study, the events reported in VAERS represent less than 1% of all adverse events which occur.

Covid-19 has >99% survival rates, which are comparable to influenza and other upper respiratory infections for the vast majority of Maryland residents under age 65. There is no comprehensive or compelling evidence that Covid-19 vaccination prevents transmission of the virus to the most vulnerable populations; therefore mandating vaccination in the workplace is unjustified.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Beth Lawson