

HB 1171

Jenna Butler
Annapolis, Maryland

Position: Favorable with Amendments

Chair Davis, Vice Chair Dumais, and members of the Economic Matters Committee,

HB 1171 is a critically necessary piece of legislation that will protect workers and employers across Maryland- I commend Delegate Charles for bringing this issue forward, because the last thing Marylanders need right now is another health or financial concern. I support HB 1171 but strongly feel that the two year sunset provision should be removed. Here's why.

Currently, three different companies- Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) have Covid-19 vaccines available under Emergency Use Authorization in the United States.

Those same three companies also collectively boast:

- billions of dollars in civil and criminal settlements, and
- innumerable instances of questionable ethics, shady recalls, malicious business practices, inexperience and incompetence, scandal, fraud, bribery, hidden data, and falsified documents... to name a few.

All of the above are examples of why no human should, under any circumstances, be FORCED to partake in their products.

Along with this written testimony, which will mention a few of the most egregious instances, I have also submitted articles that cover the corporate misdeeds of Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson, and Moderna in more detail. There are far, far more but the site would only accept ten files.

- **Pfizer:** Pfizer's \$2.3 billion dollar settlement (2009) remains the second largest FRAUD settlement in history against a pharmaceutical company. Among the charges Pfizer pleaded guilty to regarding 12 of its drug products: "promoting the sale for several uses and dosages that the FDA specifically declined to approve due to safety concerns" and "paying kickbacks to health care providers to induce them to prescribe."
- **Pfizer:** This summer, in the thick of the vaccine race, Pfizer's CEO, Albert Bourla, pre-planned a move to sell \$5.6 million dollars in stock *just one day before* Pfizer issued a glowing press release about their vaccine progress- which naturally sent the stock soaring sharply upwards. According to one expert, it is "wholly inappropriate for executives at pharmaceutical companies to be implementing or modifying plans the business day before they announce data or results from drug trials."

- **Moderna:** As of 2016, this company had published NO data supporting its vaunted mRNA technology and despite hundreds of projects in its ten year history, the Covid vaccine is the VERY FIRST product they've ever brought to market. mRNA technology- which Moderna focuses on in the hopes of tapping the lucrative treatment market for diseases like cancer- is notorious for being "exceedingly hard to get into cells without triggering nasty side effects" and has never been used for a vaccine before. Please remember, with a vaccine, we're injecting it into perfectly healthy people for possible prevention, not into sick people desperate for a cure. The safety profile must be proven and immaculate. This company's reputation for secrecy, combined with optimistic tech but no proven results is absolutely troubling in this regard- and we have NO data on the longterm side effects of these mRNA vaccines.
- **Moderna:** Similar to Pfizer, Moderna executives also cashed in on the company's soaring stock and the world's vaccine hopes before they even knew if their vaccine might work. From January-September 2020, Moderna's CEO, Chief Medical Officer, and President sold off over \$100 million dollars worth of stock. These stock selling practices appeared to experts to be "well outside the norm, and raised questions about the company's internal controls to prevent insider trading."
- **Johnson & Johnson:** The absolutely unconscionable, criminal way J&J handled safety issues with a product for BABIES should stop us in our tracks as far as trusting this company and its data. Internal documents showed that the company knew for *decades* that its baby powder was tainted with asbestos- but it kept that information from regulators and the public. Last month, J&J set aside almost \$4 billion dollars in preparation for the settlements it will owe in over 25,000 cases that blame J&J baby powder for causing cancer.
- **Johnson & Johnson:** In 2013, the company paid \$2.2 billion in criminal fines and civil settlements related to (like Pfizer), unapproved uses of a product and kickbacks for healthcare providers. The US attorney general, said the company's practices "recklessly put at risk the health of some of the most vulnerable members of our society- including young children, the elderly and the disabled."

This absolutely obscene collective corporate track record speaks for itself, and Maryland workers and businesses should be protected against it. It would be unethical and illogical to do anything but support informed consent and choice when it comes to any of their products.

I urge the committee to move HB 1171 forward with the amendment to remove the sunset provision.

Respectfully,

Jenna Butler
Annapolis, Maryland