



Support HB 1171

March 3, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you today in support of HB 1171. Black people, especially in the US, have a long history of abuse and oppression at the hands of our government and medical professionals. And systemic racism continues to have a direct impact on our health.

On the surface, these types of mandates are a well-meaning attempt to protect American citizens. But impact is greater than intent and when you make mandates in an inherently racist system, you are going to disproportionately affect and cause harm to black people and other marginalized persons.

Systemic racism will undoubtedly allow more leniency to our white counterparts while we bear the brunt of the consequences for refusal. And many of us refuse for completely valid reasons. Out of distrust, out of fear, or out of our own lived experiences.

I urge you to pass this bill so that those of us who choose to forgo the vaccine will not have to go without food, housing, or safety as a result. Say no to government paternalism. Support allowing people to make their own health choices.

Sincerely yours,

Kristyn Gerchalk
Baltimore County Resident
Holistic Herbalist, Activist, & Student Midwife

Baltimore, MD