



Written Testimony of
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Nutrition Services Manager
Moveable Feast

February 9, 2022

Chair Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena- Melnyk and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Moveable Feast regarding House Bill 6. Moveable Feast is a local, non-profit organization that makes and delivers nutritious meals to individuals with chronic illnesses. In addition to the meals, the clients have access to a registered dietitian, who designs individualized nutrition plans and sets goals with clients that are aimed to improve their overall long-term health.

One of the challenges we often face is poor dentition among our clients. We see a wide array of issues ranging from dentures that no longer fit correctly to clients with severe tooth decay and several teeth missing. Based on our records, the majority of our clients do not have access to routine dental care that might prevent such complications. Those clients with chewing difficulties may experience a loss of appetite or may feel limited to choose only soft foods. This can significantly impact one's nutrition and can often be exacerbated by their other health conditions.

Moveable Feast client, Betty*, has been profoundly impacted by her lack of access to routine dental care. When the dietitian spoke to her in August, she was struggling to eat most foods and had lost a significant amount of weight due to having sharp edges on her teeth that were causing her severe pain. When I spoke with her recently, her dental issues had still not been resolved, and her food intake had decreased even more. She was relying almost entirely on oral nutrition supplements, such as Ensure, to provide her nutrition. In addition to being a recent cancer survivor, Betty has congestive heart failure, which means that she has to limit her fluid intake. Thus, her inability to chew solid foods

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Moveable Feast is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization, contributions to which are tax-deductible. A copy of our current financial statement is available upon request by contacting our accounting office. Documents and information submitted to the State of Maryland under the Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available from the Office of the Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401 for the cost of copying and postage.

not only means that she is likely not getting the nutrition she needs, but her reliance on beverages such as Ensure can further complicate her heart condition and put her at greater risk for being readmitted to the hospital for fluid overload.

Routine access to dental care, as HB6 would provide, would help to ameliorate the unintended nutrition and health consequences that Betty has faced. Thus, for Betty, and the many clients we serve, I urge you to support House Bill 6. On behalf of all of us at Moveable Feast, thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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*Note: Client name has been changed for client protection under HIPAA.

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