



Secular Maryland

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HB 819 - OPPOSE

Public Health - COVID-19 and Other Influenza-Like Illnesses - Antibody Tests

Dear Chair Pendergrass, Vice-Chair Pena-Melnyk, and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

This bill illustrates why it is wrong for lawmakers try to anoint themselves as our doctors with laws micromanaging how we are going to protect the public from contagious disease. The Food and Drug Administration has authorized the use of Covid antibody tests, which can cost about \$70, to detect past infections. Some tests can distinguish whether the antibodies came from infections or vaccines. But neither the FDA nor the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend using the tests to assess whether you're, in fact, immune to Covid. For that, the tests are essentially useless, because there's no agreement on the amount or the types of antibodies that would signal protection from the disease. "We don't yet have full understanding of what the presence of antibodies tells us about immunity," said Kelly Wroblewski, the director of infectious diseases at the Association of Public Health Laboratories. By the same token, experts disagree about how much protection an infection delivers.

Let's listen to, respect, and follow the advice of the real experts and not create any laws that substitute for, overrule, or contradict, their advice.

Respectfully,
Mathew Goldstein
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