

# HOUSE BILL 498

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CF SB 562

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By: **Delegate Hettleman**

Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2017

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 15, 2017

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Health Care Decisions Act – Advance Directives and Surrogate Decision Making**  
3 **– Disqualified Individuals**

4 FOR the purpose of prohibiting certain individuals from serving as a health care agent  
5 under certain circumstances; establishing a certain exception; prohibiting certain  
6 individuals from making decisions about health care for certain individuals ~~who have~~  
7 ~~been certified to be incapable of making an informed decision~~; under certain  
8 circumstances; requiring a person who obtains certain information that would  
9 prohibit an individual from serving as a health care agent or making health care  
10 decisions for a certain individual to provide the information to a certain health care  
11 provider or a certain health care facility; defining a certain term; and generally  
12 relating to the Health Care Decisions Act and decision making by health care agents  
13 and surrogates.

14 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
15 Article – Health – General  
16 Section 5–602(a)  
17 Annotated Code of Maryland  
18 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

19 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
20 Article – Health – General  
21 Section 5–602(b) and 5–605(a)  
22 Annotated Code of Maryland  
23 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
2 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

3 **Article – Health – General**

4 5–602.

5 (a) (1) Any competent individual may, at any time, make a written or  
6 electronic advance directive regarding the provision of health care to that individual, or the  
7 withholding or withdrawal of health care from that individual.

8 (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in the absence of a validly  
9 executed or witnessed advance directive, any authentic expression made by an individual  
10 while competent of the individual’s wishes regarding health care for the individual shall be  
11 considered.

12 (b) (1) **(I)** In this subsection[, “disqualified person” means:] **THE**  
13 **FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.**

14 **(II) “DISQUALIFIED PERSON” MEANS:**

15 [(i)] **1.** An owner, operator, or employee of a health care facility  
16 from which the declarant is receiving health care; or

17 [(ii)] **2.** A spouse, parent, child, or sibling of an owner, operator, or  
18 employee of a health care facility from which the declarant is receiving health care.

19 **(III) “PERSON ELIGIBLE FOR RELIEF” HAS THE MEANING**  
20 **STATED IN § 4–501 OF THE FAMILY LAW ARTICLE.**

21 (2) Any competent individual may, at any time, make a written or  
22 electronic advance directive appointing an agent to make health care decisions for the  
23 individual under the circumstances stated in the advance directive.

24 (3) **(I)** A disqualified person may not serve as a health care agent unless  
25 the person:

26 [(i)] **1.** Would qualify as a surrogate decision maker under  
27 § 5–605(a) of this subtitle; or

28 [(ii)] **2.** Was appointed by the declarant before the date on which  
29 the declarant received, or contracted to receive, health care from the facility.

30 **(II) AN INDIVIDUAL MAY NOT SERVE AS A HEALTH CARE AGENT**  
31 **IF:**



1                    [(i)] 1. After reasonable inquiry, a health care provider is  
2 unaware of the existence of a health care agent or surrogate decision maker;

3                    [(ii)] 2. After reasonable inquiry, a health care provider cannot  
4 ascertain the whereabouts of a health care agent or surrogate decision maker;

5                    [(iii)] 3. A health care agent or surrogate decision maker has not  
6 responded in a timely manner, taking into account the health care needs of the individual,  
7 to a written or oral message from a health care provider;

8                    [(iv)] 4. A health care agent or surrogate decision maker is  
9 incapacitated; or

10                   [(v)] 5. A health care agent or surrogate decision maker is  
11 unwilling to make decisions concerning health care for the individual.

12                   (2) [The] **SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (4) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE**  
13 following individuals or groups, in the specified order of priority, may make decisions about  
14 health care for a person who has been certified to be incapable of making an informed  
15 decision and who has not appointed a health care agent in accordance with this subtitle or  
16 whose health care agent is unavailable. Individuals in a particular class may be consulted  
17 to make a decision only if all individuals in the next higher class are unavailable:

18                   (i) A guardian for the patient, if one has been appointed;

19                   (ii) The patient's spouse or domestic partner;

20                   (iii) An adult child of the patient;

21                   (iv) A parent of the patient;

22                   (v) An adult brother or sister of the patient; or

23                   (vi) A friend or other relative of the patient who meets the  
24 requirements of paragraph (3) of this subsection.

25                   (3) A friend or other relative may make decisions about health care for a  
26 patient under paragraph (2) of this subsection if the person:

27                   (i) Is a competent individual; and

28                   (ii) Presents an affidavit to the attending physician stating:

29                   1. That the person is a relative or close friend of the patient;

30 and

1                   2.     Specific facts and circumstances demonstrating that the  
2 person has maintained regular contact with the patient sufficient to be familiar with the  
3 patient’s activities, health, and personal beliefs.

4                   **(4)    AN INDIVIDUAL MAY NOT MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT HEALTH CARE**  
5 **FOR A PATIENT UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION IF:**

6                   **(I)    THE INDIVIDUAL IS THE SUBJECT OF AN INTERIM,**  
7 **TEMPORARY, OR FINAL PROTECTIVE ORDER AND THE PATIENT IS A PERSON**  
8 **ELIGIBLE FOR RELIEF UNDER THE ORDER; OR**

9                   **(II)   THE INDIVIDUAL IS THE SPOUSE OF THE PATIENT AND:**

10                   **1.    THE INDIVIDUAL AND PATIENT HAVE EXECUTED A**  
11 **SEPARATION AGREEMENT; OR**

12                   **2.    THE INDIVIDUAL OR PATIENT HAS FILED AN**  
13 **APPLICATION FOR DIVORCE.**

14                   **[(4)] (5)**     The attending physician shall include the affidavit presented  
15 under paragraph (3) of this subsection in the patient’s medical record.

16                   **(6)    A PERSON WHO OBTAINS NEW INFORMATION THAT WOULD**  
17 **PROHIBIT AN INDIVIDUAL FROM MAKING HEALTH CARE DECISIONS FOR A PATIENT**  
18 **UNDER PARAGRAPH (4) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL PROVIDE THE INFORMATION**  
19 **TO ANY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER OR HEALTH CARE FACILITY PROVIDING SERVICES**  
20 **TO THE PATIENT.**

21                   SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
22 October 1, 2017.

Approved:

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Governor.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.

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President of the Senate.