

HB699
Against

To: Ways and Means Committee

From: Michele Westfall

February 21, 2020

Dear Delegates,

My name is Michele Westfall and I'm Deaf. I'm a parent of two Deaf children, and I'm also a board member of the Maryland Advisory Council on Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MACDHH). I'm submitting my written testimony on HB699.

My position on this bill is “against.”

I am opposed to this bill because I believe there are systems already in place which provide the same services that an ombudsman would provide. For example, Maryland has Department of Disabilities, as well as Maryland Commission on Disabilities, Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Family Support Services under the Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services. There are also several organizations in Maryland which provide assistance with resources and disputes.

The money could be better spent on existing departments (i.e., Dept. of Disabilities, ODHH, and so forth). Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michele Westfall
Active, registered voter
Parent
Board member of MACDHH