

HB1084_SHARPE_unfav

Dear Delegates,

Of course you know that vaccine passports are in use already. You know through MyIR Mobile anyone can access their Smart Health QR code. Maryland already participates in this program. I called my health department; they were very happy to walk me through the process. Anyone can join. It is free. That really should make this whole issue moot.

As I gather, the advantage of paying three million dollars for essentially the same thing is that it makes a passport easier to implement, so adoption of "voluntary" passport system would be more likely.

The question is whether such a system is inclusive or equitable or fair. Not everyone has access to a smartphone. Why would we want to make it easier for businesses to discriminate against them?

Of course it is a business's prerogative to discriminate against someone who does not have access to the pass. Businesses can make their own rules.

But it is not right for the state of Maryland to further enable that discrimination and for three million dollars of taxpayers money to fund the system that facilitates that discrimination.

Making it easy, if that is the direction we are headed, might have advantages. It promises to be a convenience, unless data is breached like MDH's was last year. Do we really want to create another vulnerable database of Marylanders' private information?

If Maryland institutes a vaccine passport, for now, it is about covid. But how many boosters are enough? The Washington Post reported that booster effectiveness declined substantially after four months. Israel found a fourth dose insufficient. So we might have been okay with two or three but when will it end?

Or what of other adult vaccines that become required? This bill allows any future CDC approved vaccine to be added to the pass. If I don't comply, will my passport become invalid? Or will I be forced to receive the shots to maintain my ability to function in a world we created by setting up this system in the first place?

Will anyone who doesn't comply be segregated? How does that discrimination align with our values of equality?

What about passports for our kids? Parents are cautious since we are still learning about long term effects of the covid vaccines on kids. We wait. Unless a passport system forces our hands. Coercion like this does not feel entirely about health, though

Passport systems are being cancelled all over the world: Austria, NYC, Montgomery County, DC... Israel is abolishing their passport because, "To continue the green pass ...can create false assurances and it is not reducing infections."

Instituting a passport system locks us into to a solution whose need has passed.

A vaccine passport system is a bad idea.

Please vote no for this bill.
We do not want vaccine passports.