



February 4, 2022

The Honorable William C. "Bill" Ferguson IV
President of the Senate
State House, H-107
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Honorable William C. "Bill" Ferguson IV,

I write in support of Maryland House Bill 245. I urge you to support this bill as a constituent and citizen of the State of Maryland.

This statute will ensure medical professionals in our state can provide prophylactic medication for the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) to survivors of sexual assault and abuse regardless of the survivor's ability to pay for their medication. The pilot program passed in 2019 has allowed the forensic nursing program I oversee to provide HIV prophylaxis to patients who are uninsured, underinsured, or have safety concerns prohibiting them from utilizing their insurance to obtain the medication regimen that is vital to prevention of acquiring HIV after sexual assault or abuse.

Often times, sexual assault and abuse survivors are deeply concerned about their potential for acquiring HIV as a result of the assault or abuse they have experienced. As a medical provider, I have seen survivors of sexual assault and abuse served by my team express gratitude and peace of mind knowing these medications are available to them regardless of their ability to pay first-hand. Access to this medication empowers our patients to regain some of the power that was taken from them and begin to move forward without the permanent effects an HIV infection brings. I urge you to support my patients and the passage of Maryland HB 245.

Sincerely,



Jessica M. Volz DNP, CRNP, FNE A/P, FNP-BC, NE-BC, SANE-A, SANE-P, DM-AFN

