



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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House Bill 333
Hospitals – Financial Assistance – Medical Bill Reimbursement
Health Government Operations Committee - February 28, 2023
SUPPORT

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2023 legislative session. WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic Clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of HB0333. A 2021 Health Services Cost Review Commission study found that about 60% of patients legally eligible for free hospital care were instead wrongly pursued by Maryland nonprofit hospitals for \$120 million over two years (2017 and 2018) and paid their bills. The Maryland General Assembly passed legislation in 2022 requiring Maryland hospitals to identify, notify and reimburse these patients. WDC strongly supported this bill.

House Bill 333 is a technical bill that implements the best process to refund patients. It will

- Create a process for patients wrongly pursued for debt to receive refunds from hospitals.
- Allow data-sharing between state agencies and hospitals to identify and refund patients, while protecting patient privacy.
- Provide support to assist affected patients through the Office of the Attorney General.
- Require a progress report to the General Assembly.

House Bill 333 ultimately puts hard-earned cash back into the hands of low-income Marylanders who were robbed by the hospitals that were supposed to care for them. The bill gives hospitals the chance to correct past mistakes.

We ask for your support for HB333 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Diana E. Conway
WDC President

Margaret Hadley
WDC Advocacy Committee