

Edwin Martinez
803 Geronimo Drive
Frederick, MD 21701

January 26, 2024

TO: Honorable Benjamin S. Barnes and Honorable Mark S. Chang
RE: HB 98

Dear Chairman Barnes and Vice Chairman Chang:

My name is Edwin "Eddie" Martinez Jr. I am DeafBlind since birth. I strongly support this bill (HB 98) relating to CoNavigation Service in the entire state of Maryland. Maryland has approximately 32,000 DeafBlind individuals who live all over the state. We, DeafBlind community, rely heavily on CoNavigation service for countless purposes such as, reading standardized print materials, transportation to different places, Human Guiding, basic facilitating needs, and visual environmental feeds. I can add more in depth but due to time limitations here at the Hearing session. Each DeafBlind member of the community is diverse and not the same regarding communication needs and experiences in their everyday life.

My Personal experience using CoNavigation service for decades. I faced a lot of challenges with transportation, bank, shopping, and recreational activities. Without the CoNavigation service, my personal life will NOT be the same and isolated. I need the CoNavigator to accompany me through my everyday life and function as human equity.

Thank you for allowing me to share my cherished testimony with all of you. Also, thank you for showing your favor this HB 98.

Sincerely,

Eddie Martinez Jr