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MAJORITY WHIP

Appropriations Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Delegate Jazz Lewis on HB0043 - Federally Qualified Health Centers
Grant Program - Acquisition of Land**

Dear Fellow Members of the Appropriations Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on my legislation HB43 on Federally Qualified Health Centers Grant Program-Aquisition of Land. This legislation is a small bill that looks to close a loophole in the state's statute when it comes to federally qualified health centers. This incredibly important program helps bring health providers to high-needs communities to address some of the crucial health disparities that we see in our society.

However, as the Maryland code is currently written resources that are put through our states FQHC grant program cannot be used to purchase land. This oversight limits what FQHC's can do and potential limits their ability to locate into new areas when they might need this program to buy land for future centers.

This was the experience we had for an FQHC in my district which provides much needed care to some of our highest need residents. They were appropriated funds through the FQHC program but were unable to use the fund for land acquisition. This put at risk the services that were to be located at this site, all because of this small loophole. So I ask that you vote for this bill so that we can ensure FQHC's are able to fully leverage this grant program.

For these reasons I ask for a favorable report.