

Valerie Ferrell, J.D., Cecil County

I have not taken a position on HB1109 because it presents questions for me that would need answering before I could take a stand as a voter.

First, regarding the medical reserve corps, there is no provision in this bill regarding liability if a volunteer makes a mistake. Will there be immunity provided to volunteers? If so, who will be accountable if someone is harmed while a volunteer is executing their duties?

Second, I worry about the fiscal impact of this bill on Maryland.

In a state where there is a budget crisis, and state-wide understaffing in public health positions, I'm not sure it's prudent to allow a county health officer to enter into contracts without oversight of the Secretary, especially on such a short window of time.

21 (d) **(1)** Subject to the consent of the governing body of the county and the
22 written approval of the Secretary, a health officer for a county may enter into a contract or
23 any other written agreement to assist or participate in the delivery of health care services
24 with a person that is authorized to provide, finance, coordinate, facilitate, or otherwise
25 deliver health care services in the State.

26 **(2) IF THE SECRETARY DOES NOT RESPOND TO A REQUEST FOR**
27 **WRITTEN APPROVAL WITHIN 7 DAYS AFTER RECEIVING THE REQUEST, THE HEALTH**
28 **OFFICER FOR THE COUNTY MAY ENTER THE CONTRACT OR WRITTEN AGREEMENT.**

Next, where are we going to get the money for the new Public Health Workforce Development Fund? I understand there are sections of the bill that say where it will come from, but this is blood from a stone. And since this is a "Workforce" fund, does that mean the volunteer Reserve Corps needs separate funding, or is it coming out of the same pot?

Finally, if there is immunity for volunteers, and someone is harmed, and the state will be held financially accountable, where would that money come from?

Thank you for your consideration of these questions.