March 5, 2020

Chairwoman Shane Pendergrass
Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Kelly Kendall Testimony in Support of HB 1360

Chair Pendergrass and Members of the HGO Committee,

Good afternoon and thank you for having me. My name is Kelly Kendall and I am here as a part of the Immune Deficiency Foundation and to voice my support for House Bill 1360. I am a wife and a mother to 2 children and I have lived in Crofton for the past 9 years. I work as a nurse and lactation consult at Anne Arundel Medical Center. I was first diagnosed with a primary immunodeficiency when I was 17 years old following my treatment for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. I have been receiving immunoglobulin therapy for almost 20 years now and I will continue to need it for the rest of my life. Immunoglobulin therapy is prepared from the plasma donated by thousands of people, to make a super-concentrated and very diverse collection of antibodies to help fight infection. There is no generic equivalent therapy as this is a *human plasma product* and cannot be made using synthetic or chemical ingredients.

Until I've met my deductible, I am responsible for approximately $2000 a month for this treatment. The immunoglobulin therapy that I receive weekly keeps me relatively healthy and able to be a wife and a mother and a nurse here in Annapolis.

Any chronic illness but especially an immuno-deficiency makes you feel very vulnerable physically and financially. Since I have been a teenager I have been aware that my medical costs will be very high and I will always have to be concerned with how to afford them. Co-pay assistance programs which currently help pay towards my high deductible plan allow me to be able to afford the high cost of my medications. There has never been a year since 2001 when I have not met the maximum out of pocket cost for my insurance plan, and co-pay assistance has played a big part in being able to meet that obligation. Co-pay assistance programs have given me security knowing that I won't need to delay or miss infusions because of the high cost of the medication. Consistently receiving immunoglobulin therapy also means that I’m less likely to need to be hospitalized to manage infection or develop secondary complications. By supporting this bill, allowing co-pay assistance to continue being applied to individuals’ out-of-pocket maximums, you are supporting Maryland residents like me who require costly medications to keep them alive.