

March 2nd, 2020

**Brig Dumais**  
**Testimony on HB1169: Hospitals - Community Benefits Bill**  
**Position: FAVORABLE**

Dear Delegate Pendergrass and members of the Health & Government Operations Committee,

My name is Brig Dumais. I am a proud resident of District 43 in Baltimore City, a healthcare advocate, and a strong supporter of HB1169, the Hospitals - Community Benefits bill. I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a Favorable report on HB1169.

It is important that hospitals are required to pay their fair share to provide healthcare benefits to low-income communities, especially given that the healthcare system in the United States is absurdly expensive and inaccessible. The number one cause of bankruptcy nation-wide is medical debt.

Current Maryland law does not mandate a minimum for community benefits spending, despite hospitals receiving millions of dollars in tax breaks for the purpose of them providing community benefits. We need a legislative solution to this problem.

HB1169 will increase transparency, accountability, and community input regarding community benefits by:

- 1) Forming a working group to set minimum community benefits spending for each hospital;
- 2) Requiring community engagement in identifying health needs;
- 3) Mandating hospitals to disclose their community benefit expenditures, tax exempt disclosures, and other financial measures.

Healthcare is a human right, not a privilege reserved for the few who can afford it. Please issue a favorable report on HB1169.

Sincerely,

Brig Dumais  
Baltimore City Resident  
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