

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BILL #HB1476

Independent Oversight and Review Board for Health Care of Inmates in State Correctional Facilities-Establishment

Date: 03/02/2020

From: Vincent Greco

To: Chairman Luke Clippinger, Madame Chair Vanessa Atterbeary and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

Re: SUPPORT FOR BILL#HB1476

SUPPORT HB 1476 - Correctional Healthcare

TO: Chairman Clippinger and Honorable Members of The House Judiciary Committee

FR: Vincent Greco, Member of MAJR Executive Committee, Out For Justice Board Member, MRPC Member, and a voting returning citizen of Maryland

My name is Vincent Greco and I am a returning citizen after spending 34 years in the Maryland prison system. I have also been on parole and probation for the past 5½ years. I do not wish to repeat the testimony and facts behind the concept of this Bill. I know they will be presented and most on this committee know them. Let me just share my experience.

During my incarceration I saw many medical contractors come and go. Amazingly, the staff would stay and they were our foremost problem. Most work in the prison system because they were removed from community providers for lack of caring or professionalism.

Over my 34 years, I contracted the flu and had to file legal documents to ensure all prisoners, regardless of age, could get a vaccine. I won and, in the early 2000s, all prisoners were able to receive the vaccine.

I also received anti-acid medication now determined to cause cancer, but the system is still giving out this low grade medication for acid reflux!. Appalling is the word. They consistently give outdated and discontinued medications across the board IF people get any medication at all. Upon release, I was "supposedly" given a thorough physical -- EKG included. Seven months after release, I had a major heart attack with arteries 100% blocked. This did not happen in 7 months. The Department of Corrections physical was a joke, because I had "too hairy of a chest and legs" so they supposedly could not do everything. Ladies and gentlemen, now I am 60 years old, I am on 14 medications. At 55, I was playing basketball, handball, and officiating numerous sports while incarcerated in very good shape and then a lack of healthcare caused my decline. Due to a minor probation violation I was incarcerated in 2018 for 40 days. It took 7 days for me to receive any type of medication, again I was on about 10 or 11 meds at that time. I almost died!

I witnessed many medical atrocities while incarcerated. My best friend was diagnosed as having no problems and, a week later, he died from hepatitis. How do you miss a common problem like that? Prison medical contractors do on a regular basis. These medical contractors are making millions, billions of taxpayer dollars off-- not only Maryland but all other states. It is time for it to stop. The citizens, and the incarcerated citizens of Maryland deserve your attention in this matter.

Maryland should take care of the needs of incarcerated citizens, but also must not be financially taken advantage of. You all well know how contractors work! This bill could improve medical care and even save taxpayers a good amount of funds to divert to the other needs of our great state.

For the above reason and other reasons submitted to this committee, please give this Bill a favorable report. It makes sense! Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,
Vincent Greco