

OPPOSED TO SB 879

Chairs, Vice Chairs and Members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Peggy Williams. I am disturbed by many parts of this bill. But there is one part in particular that I am confused about. The fund is capped at \$40million. Where does this number even come from? I cannot for the life of me understand how the state could decide this number without any idea of what the future will hold for our states seriously birth injured children.

I am the parent of a severely disabled child. Even I have trouble planning for what the expenses will be that he will need as he ages. As would be inevitable, with an increase of these cases coming to this fund because the hospital is no longer settling any of them and instead will be litigating them all, how soon before the rates are increased for all of the birthing citizens of Maryland? This bill expressly permits that in order for the fund to remain solvent, even with treatment rationing, which will occur and has occurred in the very few states who have done this, hospitals may raise their rates on patients.

The cost of birth in Maryland is as follows:

Vaginal birth with insurance: \$6,471.87

Vaginal birth without insurance: \$12,596.52

C-section with insurance: \$9,610.39

C-section without insurance: \$16,425.80

With the ballooning cost of healthcare in Maryland, are we really going to tell hospitals they can have essentially immunity at the expense of not only private insurance, but at the expense of state and federal Medicaid and Medicare costs? I find that unconscionable.

Thank you for your time and urge you to please vote against this bill.

Peggy Williams