

**HB1171: Labor and Employment – Maryland Employee Protection Plan for
Vaccine Refusal
SUPPORT**

March 5, 2021

Dear Chair Davis, Vice-Chair Dumais, and members of the Economic Matters Committee,

I am writing today to request a FAVORABLE REPORT for HB 1171.

I run a small organization that employs 12 staff and has 30 volunteers. We are a school and have been fortunate to offer in-person education this year. We have moved our classes outdoors and strictly enforce screening, quarantining, cleaning, masking and distancing protocols. We plan to continue offering the same safety measures and in-person learning until the pandemic is over.

Our administration and board have discussed what a Covid-19 vaccine mandate for staff and volunteers might look like and have decided that it would not be in the best interest of our organization for several reasons. First, we are not in the business of policing our staff and volunteers' medical needs and prefer to leave that to them and their medical providers. Also, we do not have the resources to defend ourselves should we need to fire a staff member or volunteer for not getting the vaccine and they decide to pursue litigation. Finally, as a small organization, if it came down to choosing between allowing staff to skip vaccination, or replacing talent that has carefully been recruited and trained, we would prefer to keep our talent as we don't have the resources to cultivate new talent unnecessarily.

As an organization, we are discussing making a public statement strongly in favor of vaccination in lieu of mandating vaccination and feel this will be a more productive option for our community and operations. I believe that this option would be best for all employers in Maryland.

Sincerely,
Alicia Cacace
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