

TO: The Honorable Delores Kelley
Chair, Senate Finance Committee

FROM: Annie Coble
Assistant Director, State Affairs
Johns Hopkins University and Medicine

DATE: February 11, 2021

Johns Hopkins opposes **Senate Bill 322 Health and Wellness Standards – Correctional Facilities and Health Care Facilities**. This bill would require all health care facilities to offer plant-based food alternatives. Johns Hopkins appreciates the intent of this legislation and is actively working to create more plant based options in all of its hospitals throughout the health system. In fact, Bayview Medical Center is now offering plant-based food options at all of the retail food venues. An example menu is attached to this testimony. Johns Hopkins also takes seriously the food needs of their patients while they are staying overnight. Information related to food allergies and preferences are collected and communicated to the food services staff for every inpatient. We have menu options to accommodate allergies and preferences. All of our patient menu items are coded based on the ingredients they contain to allow us to prevent the item from being chosen by a patient having an allergy to any of those ingredients. Johns Hopkins currently tracks over 100 allergens for our patients. As described above, we believe we are taking actions consistent with the intent of the SB 322; however, there are several provisions in this law that would make it impossible to implement.

Specifically, ensuring that plant-based food options are offered at the same or a lower cost when compared to nonplant-based options. Johns Hopkins does not purchase plant-based alternatives at the same price as nonplant-based options. Therefore, if this were to become law, Johns Hopkins would offer plant-based options at a financial loss.

Secondly, the provision that requires lowering the amount of sodium, saturated fat, and sugar in all foods is too vague to be effectively implemented. Johns Hopkins is dedicated to creating healthy options for all patients and staff. Recently, Johns Hopkins has been using behavioral economics methods to empower people to make healthy options. For example, the price of healthier food choices will be 20% lower than the cost of less healthier options, making it more enticing to choose the healthier option.

The goal of this legislation is admirable, to create a healthier Maryland. Johns Hopkins works towards this goal every day. However, the specifics of the legislation make it impossible to effectively implement. For these reasons, Johns Hopkins urges an unfavorable report on **Senate Bill 322 Health and Wellness Standards – Correctional Facilities and Health Care Facilities**.



**PLANT-FORWARD
FLAVOR**

Now serving plant-based proteins,
and vegan and vegetarian options!

AJ'S DELI

 Chick'n Salad

71 CALORIES	193mg SODIUM	<0.5g SATURATED FAT
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GREENS PROJECT

 Roasted Tofu

34 CALORIES	0mg SODIUM	<0.5g SATURATED FAT
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LEMONGRASS

Vegetable Stir-Fry
with plant-based protein

197 CALORIES	1,230mg SODIUM	1g SATURATED FAT
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ROCCOS'S PASTA

 Red Lentil Pasta

382 CALORIES	0mg SODIUM	0g SATURATED FAT
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PRIME GRILL

 Vegan Burger

234 CALORIES	483mg SODIUM	<1g SATURATED FAT
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 Portobello Mushroom

62 CALORIES	56mg SODIUM	<1g SATURATED FAT
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SUPERBOWLS

Vegetarian Options Available

Nutrition information
available upon request.

 = healthy food option