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DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Health and Government  
Operations Committee

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**Delegate Ariana Kelly Statement**  
**HB 1375 - Health Information Exchanges - Electronic Health Information - Sharing and**  
**Disclosure**  
**April 7, 2021**

Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to present HB 1375, a bill that simplifies health information privacy for all Marylanders. I took this bill on as a late file because of its enormous importance to any consumer with sensitive health data, such as victims of domestic violence, people who suffer from substance abuse and mental health challenges, and women who fear reprisals associated with reproductive health.

Maryland has 11 health information exchanges, or HIEs. HIEs have transformed medical care by enabling providers to easily share our information with other providers, but some information is more sensitive and people wish to keep it private. Every HIE has a privacy opt-out mechanism, but the opt-out is effective only for the specific HIE. HB 1375 requires the establishment of a one-stop opt-out website so that consumers can choose to opt-out once and have their privacy instruction be received and respected by all 11 HIEs.

As introduced, the bill also would have conformed Maryland's statutory definition of HIE to a new federal definition that is effective on April 5. Stakeholders objected to Maryland making this change immediately, so the amended bill now directs the Maryland Health Care Commission to convene stakeholders and recommend a new definition by December 1.

I hope you will agree with more than a dozen consumer and patient advocacy groups that personal health care privacy is important and should be simplified, and that you will support this bill.