

February 17, 2022

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

SB 281 Comptroller - Online Payment Processing Portal

The IMAGE Center for People with Disabilities is a Center for Independent Living serving people in Baltimore City, Baltimore County and Harford County. We serve veterans through an agreement with the Maryland Department of Aging and currently are owed over \$140,000 in past due bills going as far back as 2019. The effect of this is that in order to float the State of Maryland a loan we have to use donated dollars that could otherwise be spent on direct services.

Clearly, without some requirement, we are not a priority for payment. We cannot often even find out the status of any given payment.

We have been providing services to Veterans and their families to keep veterans in their homes. We currently serve over 35 Veterans in this program. This program is paid as a fee-for-service, a set amount of money each month.

Maryland has a great opportunity to ensure that those non-profits serving some of the most vulnerable residents are treated equitably and fairly. We urge your favorable report on this Bill.

Sincerely,

Michael Bullis,

Executive Director,

Independent Marylanders Achieving Growth Through Empowerment, Inc.

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