

SB839- **UNFAVORABLE**

March 1, 2022

Senators,

I write today to ask you to rule SB 839 **UNFAVORABLE**.

Vaccine passports not only are a waste of financial resources, vaccines have not curbed the spread of Covid-19 infections at all, and safeguarding personal medical information at the state level has recently failed.

Money can definitely be better spent on reducing costs for every day Marylanders trying to buy gas and groceries, or heat their homes. My grocery bill has doubled in the last month. Thankfully, we still have an income. For many that have very low incomes, are retired or disabled, or entry level jobs, this will absolutely break budgets where the choice will be made not just what to eat, but what to do – eat or keep the lights on?

I serve my community at my church's food pantry. We have even less funds to buy groceries to give to those in need. The quantity of families have in increased, and our budget has stayed the same. We do what we can as a church community by receiving donations, but families can only afford so much before they cut back on helping the poor.

Another aspect of this vaccine passport is "prevention of the spread of Covid-19." If you look at the infection curves and hospital visits, it seems as though those vaccinated have had negative outcomes during the Omicron surge this past December and January. The infection and hospitalization rates were highest amongst vaccinated individuals.

I myself became infected after both of my fully-vaccinated parents unknowingly shared the virus with my family. Thankfully we are recovered, but my parents are not and continue to fight to get better.

A vaccine passport would not have stopped this transmission.

My last concern is securing medical data. Back in December, the Maryland Department of Health was compromised. My mother-in-law passed away around this time so I was quite aware. Her medical data was unable to be verified for her death certificate. What happened during the breach? How will a vaccine passport, with so many access points, be able to be secured when we know recovering the information and seeing the damage done to personal information takes much time and financial resources. For as long as there are bad actors, there is risk to private data by unsecured means.

All around, the vaccine passport seems like an unwise decision with regard to resources and outcomes.

Respectfully, I ask that you **oppose** SB 839.

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