

SB839

Unfavorable

Love Maryland PAC

Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Distinguished Members of the Finance Committee,

The Love Maryland PAC submits testimony to request an unfavorable report on SB839-Voluntary Covid-19 Vaccine Passports.

These passports are unnecessary, dangerous for our citizens private medical data and simply not wanted here in the state of Maryland.

The Montgomery County Council recently held a hearing on vaccine passports. The response was overwhelming and all negative. They received so much testimony that they had to schedule a second hearing on the initiative. The Montgomery Country Chamber of Commerce opposed it, ALL businesses that spoke opposed it, every citizen that spoke opposed it. The onus on businesses (even if labeled as voluntary) was overwhelming. Businesses can barely hire enough workers to keep their doors open now, let alone having to hire additional vaccine passport checkers, is simply not possible in this employment environment.

Additionally, given the ongoing conflict and cyberattacks by Russia, the last thing we should be encouraging is for our citizens to put their private medical data on an unprotected app for anyone to hack. We request that this passport is off the table until such time as the government can guarantee that the information is secure.

This bill is fiscally irresponsible. We are in a time of great need amongst our most vulnerable citizens. The money that would be wasted on these unnecessary passports and the IT infrastructure that would be required to support such an endeavor could be spent to actually bring much needed services to our low-income residents- services desperately needed after almost 2 years of being locked out of routine medical care.

This bill discriminates against our socioeconomically disadvantaged and BIPOC communities. Not everyone has access to a computer, smartphone and the internet. This bill will serve as a racial barrier for our citizens to meet their most basic needs. Vulnerable Marylanders need actual help and support in meeting their medical needs- and this bill does nothing but divert needed resources away from the citizens who need the resources the most.

For the reasons listed above, we ask the committee to deliver an unfavorable report on SB839.

Sincerely,

Megan Montgomery

Chair

Love Maryland PAC