

Employed Individuals with Disabilities Program

Testimony on SB867

Equal Love for Employees with Disabilities Act

Position: FAVORABLE

To Chair Kelley and the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Sama Bellomo, and I'm a resident of Baltimore City. I have been enrolled in the Employed Individuals with Disabilities (EID) Program for over 8 years.

My partner and I want to marry, but we can't, or else I will lose eligibility for EID based on his income. I could not work, or even live, without the extensive services that Medicaid provides for me. If this marriage penalty were not in place, I would marry my partner and continue living in his Baltimore home. My partner and I have to live in sin indefinitely because EID, for my physical health, has more power over me than my religious and moral values.

For years I have testified and marched for marriage equality; it seems my work is not done.

Please add the protections we with disabilities need to earn a living; save enough to own, modify and keep property; for as long as we are able to work--just like everyone else. I'm asking for what I need, not for what I think I can get. I need what non-disabled people have, and I'm literally willing to work for it.

I respectfully urge this committee to issue a favorable report on SB867.

Sincerely,

Sama Bellomo
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