



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

School of Public Health

March 7, 2022

Chair Shane E. Pendergrass
Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401
March 7, 2022

Dear Honorable Chair Pendergrass:

I write in support of Bill HR1082, Consumer Health Information Hub and Requirements. HB1082 will provide state and local government agencies, health systems, nonprofit and community-based organizations and other entities with health literacy expertise and resources.

This bill is pivotal because health literacy is essential to support informed health care decision-making by individuals, families and health care providers. Health literacy is key to addressing systemic health inequalities which became devastatingly clear with COVID-19.

As a longtime resident of Maryland, this bill is personal to me. I am aware of the unmet health needs in our state. In 2007 my gift to the then new School of Public Health, at the University of Maryland College Park campus, led to the creation of the Herschel S. Horowitz Center for Health Literacy. The emerging science of health literacy was the driving force behind my previous and ongoing investments.

Studies had documented ways in which investments in and attention to the health literacy of individuals, health care providers and health facilities contributed to the promotion of health, reductions of health care costs and increased quality of care. Also, it was clear to me then, and even more now, if we want to increase health equity, additional investment in health literacy is vital. The bill expands the impact of the center and leverages our Center subject matter expertise for the benefit of the entire state.

The Center is unique among Schools of Public Health. Its mission is to advance health literacy in Maryland and the nation. I am incredibly grateful that others recognize the need for these skills and practices and the opportunity to extend them beyond the walls of academia into our communities and beyond.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alice M. Horowitz".

Alice M. Horowitz, PhD
Research Professor
School of Public Health
University of Maryland

College Park, MD 20742
301-405-9797