



January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022

UPMC Western MD  
12500 Willowbrook Road  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
House Bill 296

Testimony in support of House Bill 296:

Dear Judiciary Committee, my name is Debi Wolford RN FNE A/P and I live and work in Western Maryland Allegany County. I have been the Forensic Nursing Service Program Coordinator at UPMC Western MD for over 25 years and know what a great service this would be for our patients if this bill is passed. Although our hospital is located within the city limits of Cumberland, Allegany County District Court is 2.4 miles away. This distance is too far for most our patients to walk if we cannot find them transportation. Sometimes patients have their own transportation but many others patients rely on family, friends or our cab service. Our community currently has one cab service, open M-F 5am until 12 midnight ( midnight if they have the staff ) and are NOT open on the week-ends, the ED is constantly holding patients because of a transportation issue. Our patients are sometimes injured severely and need admission, while we have policy and procedures to help with safety for our patients without a protective order in place nothing is stopping the offender from coming to the hospital, unfortunately receiving medical care delays their current ability ( depending on admission could be days or weeks ) to obtain a protective order from the courts. Our rural community, our victims of Domestic Violence need this bill passed.

I urge you to support House Bill 296 so our ED and hospitalized patients can have the ability to obtain Protective Order while still in the hospital. Thank you for your consideration.

**Debi Wolford, RN FNE A/P**

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