

**POSITION:** FAVORABLE: HB0995 Commercial Law - Health Data Privacy  
**TO:** Economic Matters Committee  
**DATE:** March 1, 2023  
**FROM:** Dr. Mary Helen Spear, Swanton, Garrett County, MD  
Mountain Maryland Alliance for Reproductive Freedom (MMARF)

My name is Mary Helen Spear. I live in Garrett County, and I'm a retired professor from Prince George's Community College. I'm also a member of the Mountain Maryland Alliance for Reproductive Freedom, a non-partisan, grassroots organization of people in Allegany and Garrett Counties, committed to assuring and expanding reproductive healthcare in rural Mountain Maryland.

Personal healthcare information is just that - it's personal and it's private. HIPPA recognizes this - healthcare providers cannot disclose healthcare information to anyone other than the patient without her consent. These are protections that doctors respect and patients deserve.

However, these laws are limited, because they don't apply to online data that is collected by private companies. Consider this – if one of my granddaughters does a Google search for a healthcare provider, a pregnancy testing service, contraception information, or how to get an abortion, that on-line search data is not her own.

Existing privacy laws won't protect her health information in an app, either, like those that women routinely use to track their periods, their use of contraception, when they have sex, their fertility, and their pregnancy. The laws don't even protect online information about her travel or location.

I am concerned about this because of my own experience.

Ten years ago, I was undergoing chemotherapy treatments in nearby Morgantown, West Virginia. One morning my phone popped up with a message that my commute from my home in Garrett County would be longer than usual. Surprisingly, my phone was giving me the route I would take to the hospital. I had not been using it for directions – it was simply tracking me. Google and Verizon knew where I was and where I was headed! Ten years ago! Think about what technology could do now!

We urge you to support this bill.

Thank you.

