

## Maryland ER Wait Time Testimony

In favor of SB0387 - Task Force on Reducing Emergency Department Wait Times

On October, 17 2022, I began experiencing intense and debilitating pain. I sought out help from my primary physician and specialist, resulting in a degenerative disc disease diagnosis.

Despite on-going care, my condition continued to worsen, and I needed emergent care. On November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022 I checked in to Bayview ER at 9pm. At 3am, after 6 hours of crying and passing out due to muscle spasms, my vitals were taken. At 4am, I was given 2 extra strength Tylenol with no talk of care. My father, who had driven up from Northern Virginia to take me to the ER, requested to speak with someone. While we waited, we discussed with the idea of driving to Virginia for out of state medical care. I could barely handle the 2-mile drive from my home to Bayview, so the 70+ mile drive out of state was unfathomable. Before 5am, my father was informed the average wait time in the ER is 26 hours. At this point, we chose to leave the ER as I had a scheduled appointment with my physician in a few hours.

My physician was not able to do much but told me if my condition worsened again to seek emergent care again. I prepared myself by researching hospitals in the city and surrounding counties and when the best times to seek emergent care is. On November 16th, I checked in to Howard County General Hospital ER before 11am. I was seen within 6 hours and told I needed to be admitted to the hospital due to my condition.

A synonym for emergent is immediate. There is nothing immediate about a 26+ hour wait. As it stands, emergency care does not exist in Maryland hospitals. It's devastating to know that my life and the lives of the people in my community are at jeopardy due to this issue. Please consider approving this bill to create a task force to address this glaring barrier to health care before you find yourself or your loved ones in need of emergency care.



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