



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND  
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

[www.womensdemocraticclub.org](http://www.womensdemocraticclub.org)

**Senate Bill 404**  
**Hospitals – Financial Assistance – Medical Bill Reimbursement**  
**Finance Committee - February 23, 2023**  
**SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club** (WDC) for the 2023 legislative session. WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic Clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

**WDC urges the passage of SB0404.** A 2021 Health Services Cost Review Commission study found that about 60% of patients legally eligible for free hospital care were instead wrongly pursued by Maryland nonprofit hospitals for \$120 million over two years (2017 and 2018) and paid their bills. The Maryland General Assembly passed legislation in 2022 requiring Maryland hospitals to identify, notify and reimburse these patients. WDC strongly supported this bill.

Senate Bill 404 is a technical bill that implements the best process to refund patients. It will

- Create a process for patients wrongly pursued for debt to receive refunds from hospitals.
- Allow data-sharing between state agencies and hospitals to identify and refund patients, while protecting patient privacy.
- Provide support to assist affected patients through the Office of the Attorney General.
- Require a progress report to the General Assembly.

Senate Bill 404 ultimately puts hard-earned cash back into the hands of low-income Marylanders who were robbed by the hospitals that were supposed to care for them. The bill gives hospitals the chance to correct past mistakes.

**We ask for your support for SB0404 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.**

Diana E. Conway  
WDC President

Margaret Hadley  
WDC Advocacy Committee