

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and Distinguished Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

On behalf of the Love Maryland PAC, we write to express our concerns about SB281: Commission on Public Health- Establishment. We believe that this bill is unnecessary and will result in handing an unprecedented amount of authority to non- elected public officials to the detriment of the State of Maryland.

The scope of the grant of authority in this bill is overly broad, and this type of authority over Maryland citizens' daily lives needs to remain with the General Assembly and Governor's Office- which are elected to represent their constituents. Handing this authority over every Marylanders' daily life to a non-elected, non-accountable commission will be disastrous for the people's faith in government, and may lead to worse health outcomes for Maryland's most vulnerable citizens.

Finally, the proposed commission set up with consensus decision making will result in dissenting members of the commission being effectively silenced- this is not how vital public policy should be made. Additionally, while there is some limited opportunity for public comment, considering that the minority voices on the commission will be marginalized: tax paying, voting citizens of the state of Maryland need to have an outsized number of opportunities for meaningful input, which the bill as written does not provide.

This full scale granting of authority to a non-elected body is especially unconscionable considering that often advisories to public health can and do change with the science during fast moving health crises, and commissions such as this struggle to keep up with the latest scientific evidence.

For these reasons, the Love Maryland PAC requests that the Finance committee not support SB281.

Thank you,

Megan Montgomery
Chair
Love Maryland PAC