



SB480-Mental Health Law-Assisted Outpatient Treatment Programs - Oppose

Testimony of Maryland Centers for Independent Living

Senate Finance Committee 02/28/2023

The Maryland Centers for Independent Living oppose SB480.

Assistive outpatient treatment is involuntary and coercive. Demand for mental health treatment already outweighs supply. This bill could put an individual who does not want treatment ahead of an individual who does. Many studies show that involuntary treatment is ineffective. To effectively treat people with serious mental illness, you must first address social determinants of health such as housing, healthcare, food, transportation, etc. This bill does not address any of these issues. This bill does not provide any safeguards against it being disproportionately used on people of color. For these reasons, the Maryland Centers for Independent Living are opposed to this bill.

The seven Centers for Independent Living (CIL) were established by federal law and work to ensure the civil rights and quality services of people with disabilities in Maryland. Centers for Independent Living are nonprofit disability resource and advocacy organizations located throughout Maryland operated by and for people with disabilities. CIL staff and Boards are at least 51% people with disabilities. We are part of a nationwide network which provides Information and Referral, Advocacy, Peer Support, Independent Living Skills training, and Transition Services.

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