

# Support HB699 with Amendment HB0699/993123/1

March 6, 2023

Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Chair  
House Health and Government Operations Committee

## **HB 699 - State and Local Government - Proof of Vaccination for Employees and Applicants for Employment - Prohibition (Vaccination by Choice Act)**

**Position: FAVORABLE with Amendment**

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my strong support for **HB 699 - State and Local Government - Proof of Vaccination for Employees and Applicants for Employment - Prohibition (Vaccination by Choice Act)**

I am a parent of current students at the University of Maryland at College Park, an alumni of the same college, and a long-time Maryland resident. My family caught Covid before any vaccine was available. We recovered at home in a week. Later two of my children got the vaccine.

The most difficult part of mandates was the onslaught of coercion and intimidation on campus. The only way to “fit in” was to be cheerful about getting the vaccine. If you weren’t vaccinated you could not talk about it openly. This reminded me of life in the Soviet Union, where certain topics were taboo and not to be spoken of. That psychological attack was the most damaging to our life, health, and well-being. Being second-rate and disposable is the worst feeling, the opposite of being safe. Are we really US citizens without equal rights?

I understood that coercion was by design. The organizations mandating couldn’t care less if they pushed anyone who didn’t comply out. The authorities wanted to force everyone into compliance or get rid of anyone who objected. And so, the university policies intended to make life difficult for those not vaccinated by mandatory testing, masking, and loss of privileges. There was no logic or scientific reason for any of those policies, pure coercion. It was obvious from the beginning of mandates, when acceptance of immunity from a previous infection had to be fought in court; the definition of the word “vaccine” was changed multiple times, but vaccines were still considered infallible; and doctors’ opinions did not count, thus denying them the right to practice medicine.

How many of those decisions and policies were simply wrong because of bad assumptions or someone’s hope? Should state organizations be able to trample civil rights of their employees and students to promote their agenda? Why do citizens live at the mercy of some executive decisions taken behind closed doors without any transparency? Please prohibit any such administrative mandates without fair and complete hearing and vote by the elected representatives.

Sincerely,  
Mark Meyerovich  
Gaithersburg, MD