

HB699, as amended, FWA, Shannon Ballard, Anne Arundel County, Maryland

Esteemed Elected Maryland Legislators, I emphatically ask for you to support HB699, as amended, to protect students from having to choose between their education and their health ever again. The University of Maryland, our public flagship institution, withheld informed medical consent from its students and staff when it mandated COVID vaccine and boosters and should never have this power again.

The University has been opaque in its decision-making and none of its deliberations regarding the reasons for retaining its vaccine mandate after the University System of Maryland lifted theirs (in August 2021) or reason to double down by adding a booster requirement (in January 2022) have been shared with the public. Given that the University of Maryland is a public university for which Maryland taxpayers' contribute, they should be prohibited from requiring proof of COVID vaccination from any student or staff.