

My name is Allison Burket and I am writing to express my support for HB0900: Occupational Safety and Health - Public Buildings - Indoor Air Quality.

I am a 35-year old, vaccinated, previously healthy resident of Bladensburg, MD, who has now been out of work for 7 months due to Long Covid. The risk factors for developing this debilitating condition are not well known; my initial infection was mild, and I did not develop long-term symptoms until my second exposure to Covid. I strongly support this bill because I believe no one should have to go through what I'm going through as a result of working in or visiting a public building.

The long-term impact of covid infections goes far beyond my individual suffering. A Harvard economist estimated in June 2022 that **Long Covid has cost us \$3.7 trillion as a nation**, saying, **"With costs this high, virtually any amount spent on long COVID detection, treatment, and control would result in benefits far above what it costs."**<sup>1</sup> Slowing the spread of COVID is one of the most important and cost-efficient ways to limit those costs.

**Experts estimate that COVID transmission can be reduced by up to 80% by improving indoor ventilation and filtration.**<sup>2</sup> As stated in a December 2022 White House briefing, "COVID-19 is primarily transmitted through the air, so improving ventilation, increasing air filtration, or disinfecting the air can directly reduce the number of virus-containing particles in indoor air and thereby reduce the risk of inhaling these particles from shared air."<sup>3</sup>

Therefore I believe this bill is an important step in protecting Marylanders and the Maryland economy from further damage due from Covid. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to following the outcome of this hearing.

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<sup>1</sup> David Cutler, "The Economic Cost of Long Covid," July 2022, available at <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/mrcbg/programs/growthpolicy/economic-cost-long-covid-update-david-cutler>

<sup>2</sup> Fondazione David Hume, "Data Analysis: Controlled Mechanical Ventilation (CMV) works," March 25, 2022, available at <https://www.fondazionehume.it/data-analysis/controlled-mechanical-ventilation-cmv-works/>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/news-updates/2022/03/23/lets-clear-the-air-on-covid/>