

Testimony in Support of SB 453 Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Bills in Maryland
Position: Favorable

Seanniece Bamiro
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District 25

February 12, 2024

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier and members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Seanniece Bamiro and I am a District 25 resident and an advocate for mental health. Maryland should improve treatment for people with serious mental illnesses (SMIs) and one way of doing that is by establishing evidenced-based assisted outpatient treatment (AOT) programs. AOT programs treat the whole person and uncover the root issues associated with patterns of behavior and have been said to reduce trauma, homelessness, suicide, and involvement with police. If established, Maryland would join 47 other states that have authorized AOT programs.

I stand in solidarity with my fellow mental health advocate Ms. Debra Bennet whose son died by suicide related to mental health issues. In her Baltimore Sun op-ed (<https://www.baltimoresun.com/2024/02/05/maryland-assisted-outpatient-treatment/>), she states that while it was too late for her son to benefit from assisted outpatient treatment programs, establishing and funding these in the state of Maryland can be a life-saving intervention for other Marylanders going through the same hardships.

I urge you to save the lives of Marylanders experiencing mental health issues and give a favorable report to SB 453.

Thank you,

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