

## HB576 Testimony

From: Christina Flowers, Owner of Real Care Providers 501 (c)(3) , 2524 N. Charles Street, Baltimore MD 21218

POSITION: FAVORABLE

It saddens me to have to come to another hearing regarding HB576 again this year. I feel like our cries for help are not being heard. I dedicate so much time to those homeless on our streets whose lives are deteriorating and it all started with a lack of mental health care. These are human people who breathe and bleed just like you and I and often cannot advocate for themselves. What happens when their judgment is so hindered that they don't get the appropriate care their mental health needs? Well come out to one day in Baltimore City with me for an hour and I can show you how hundreds of mothers, grandmothers, military vets, disabled people are outside and helpless with one common denominator which is - they need mental health care. This trauma plagues our streets of Baltimore City causing more mental illness and where or when does it end?

Specifically they need the assistance of an AOT program to be implemented here in Maryland. The facts have shown its success in 47 other states and yet this state has the ability to make it happen for the vulnerable here and yet we still are waiting.

I attended these meetings last year in this same month. In just one year, THREE mothers who have advocated for this bill have had to bury their children. Not one, I said three mothers who stood before this board a year ago asking for help had to bury their children. Please let that sink in.

While you may not know what its like to be mentally ill or have a loved one who is mentally ill, the sad reality is its real for many people and people who are relying on you to make this change in Maryland. Please don't fail us any more and cause any more families unwarranted grief.

HB576 should be passed by each of you with FAVOR because it will change lives and at any expense it is truly worth it. I appreciate everyones time and look forward to seeing you all in person on Weds.

Thank You,

Minister Christina Flowers  
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