

HB 576

Date: February 14, 2024

From: Mary Ellen Moran, Bowie, Maryland 20716 (District 23)

Position: SUPPORT

As an individual with bipolar disorder and with a son with schizophrenia and a deceased mother who had schizophrenia, I am pleased to support HB 576. As a taxpayer I am entitled to treatment. This Bill would ensure that I receive treatment in the least restrictive setting in the event I ever meet the criteria for Assisted Outpatient Treatment.

My mother frequently stopped taking her medication and was committed to psychiatric hospitals at least 18 times before she died at the age of 43. I recall that when I was school age I would call my favorite Aunt and say "Mom is talking funny again." My Aunt and other family came to the rescue. I really missed her when she was hospitalized. When well she was a wonderful Mom. She made the most delicious chocolate chip cookies on earth, She did have a lot of respect for the law and judges; and I am certain had a judge ordered her to take her medication she would have. My childhood would have been happier without her absences from my life.

According to Maryland State Law, Health - General, §10-102:

"It is the policy of this State:

"(1) To the best of its ability, to foster and preserve the mental health of its citizens; and

"(2) To that end, to provide without partiality care and treatment to citizens who have mental disorders."

HB 576 reflects the above-cited statutory policy, and. It ensures that treatment is provided in the least restrictive setting. The Bill ensures a treatment plan that is comprehensive and considers all aspects of living successfully in the community. Respondents are given a reasonable opportunity to participate in the plan development.

HB 576 also allows for an emergency evaluation of whether I need involuntary admission to a hospital. All aspects of what is in my best interests are covered by this bill and it ensures that I get the treatment I need. It is critical that I receive treatment as soon as possible when I need it and am unable to make a rational and informed decision to seek it.

HB 576 reflects evidence-based practice and, as written, needs no amendments. Therefore, I respectfully request that you give HB 576 a favorable report with no changes..