

Testimony for Maryland [HB 1007](#)

Hearing in Health & Government Operations Committee: February 20, 2025; 1:00 pm

Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 1007 – Protecting Genetic Privacy

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the Health & Government Operations Committee,

My name is Dr. Erin Wright, and I am a constituent and an advocate with the Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance (OCRA). I strongly support HB 1007, which would protect Marylanders from genetic discrimination in life, disability, and long-term care insurance. As someone who has both faced an ovarian cancer diagnosis, and as a certified nurse-midwife providing health care services to those assigned female at birth, I know firsthand how vital genetic testing can be in saving lives.

Genetic testing provides critical information that empowers individuals to make informed medical decisions, yet the fear of discrimination prevents many from accessing these potentially life-saving tests. BRCA 1 and BRCA 2, are two of the many genetic markers linked to some ovarian and breast cancers. Early detection and preventive care, which could be afforded to patients by these tests, can mean the difference between life and death. No one should have to choose between protecting their health and securing their financial future.

While the federal Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) prohibits genetic discrimination in health insurance, there is currently no such protection for life, disability, and long-term care insurance. This gap in the law disproportionately impacts those with a family history of cancer and other hereditary conditions. HB 1007 would ensure that Marylanders can undergo genetic testing without fear of financial repercussions or discrimination, fostering a healthcare environment that prioritizes prevention and early intervention.

I urge this committee to support HB 1007 and protect the privacy and well-being of Marylanders seeking to take proactive steps in managing their health. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Erin Wright, DNP, CNM, FAAN, FACNM

Baltimore, MD

Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance