

HB1006 Immigration Enforcement - Sensitive Locations - Guidelines and Policies  
(Protecting Sensitive Locations Act)

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and Committee members.

My name is Wendy Frosh, and I am here as a health policy consultant and a long-standing advocate for access to healthcare services. I also serve as a Board member for a Federally Qualified Health Center and for Planned Parenthood of Maryland. Both of these organizations provide a broad range of healthcare – from primary care to specialty services - often to individuals who face multiple barriers to accessing care. In both settings, our services are available regardless of an individual's ability to pay and are provided in a culturally sensitive manner, to improve accessibility and compliance with treatment options.

The importance of protecting patients where and when they seek care cannot be underestimated. But when people feel that seeking care might put them and their families at risk, they often opt to skip the care they need. Timely care is essential not just to individuals, but to their families and ultimately to the communities where they live. The health of the community depends on the health of its residents, and delayed care can have deep and lasting impact. The increased burden of disease affects the vibrancy of our communities. Sick kids can't go to school. Parents can't go to work. And ultimately, that impacts the economy. If from no other lesson, we learned that during the pandemic.

We need to do our best to make sure that care is available when and where it is needed. HB1006 will help us protect our patients by increasing safety and privacy of those seeking care.

Thank you for your time.