

My name is Scott Richey-Stavrand and I am asking you to please support and vote in favor of SB0392. This bill will create critical programs like the Maryland Long Covid Research Fund and support Long Covid innovation which Long Covid patients can't wait another minute for.

My wife Emily has had long covid for many years now. It has had a devastating impact on our life together and thwarted our plans to start a family. She has had to take extended time off from her studies and has no clear path forward at the moment. I now face the pressure of having to care for her and work while only in our thirties. Any research or support will have a tremendous impact on both our lives and the lives of many others facing similar challenges.

Covid-19 is still running rampant through Maryland, leaving new cases of Long Covid in adults and children in its wake. Wastewater data shows around 117,300 new weekly cases currently in Maryland<sup>1</sup>, which will leave around 20,000 people disabled by Long Covid...again, weekly. Annapolis is at the CDC's highest level of Covid spread- Very High. Nationally, Covid case numbers are higher now than all of 2020 and 2021. This is a crisis.

Around 25-30% of people who get Covid will develop Long Covid (LC)<sup>2</sup>, a complex disease that is composed of 200 symptoms and has no approved treatment or cure<sup>3</sup>. The likelihood of developing LC goes up around 14% with each Covid infection, so by three infections, the chance is 40%<sup>4</sup>. The risk further increases if someone is a women<sup>5</sup>, Black<sup>6</sup>, Latino<sup>7</sup>, disabled or chronically ill<sup>8</sup>, low-income<sup>9</sup>, Trans<sup>10</sup>, has HIV/AIDS<sup>11</sup>, elderly<sup>12</sup>, Indigenous<sup>13</sup>, and/or a healthcare worker<sup>14</sup>. Around 50% of people with LC also develop the devastating condition Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME)<sup>15</sup>, which has a recovery rate of only ~5%<sup>16</sup>. Nationally, lost earnings alone due to LC are estimated at \$170 billion yearly<sup>17</sup>.

Marylanders with Long Covid and their friends and family are desperate for help and the federal funding and care for LC research is abysmal at best. We are depending on our state leaders to care about us and fight for us. Please support SB0392 and be the leaders and innovators that sick Marylanders deserve.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Scott Richey-Stavrand

1. <https://www.pmc19.com/data/>

2. <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/covid-19/studies-across-14-nations-show-25-30-rate-long-covid>

3. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2805540>
4. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2023001/article/00015-eng.htm>
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/long-term-effects/index.html>
6. <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/nih-recover-research-identifies-potential-long-covid-disparities>
7. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/long-term-effects/index.html>
8. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/long-term-effects/index.html>
9. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/long-term-effects/index.html>
10. <https://longcovidjustice.org/trans/>
11. <https://longcovidjustice.org/hiv-lc-risk/>
12. <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/long-term-effects/index.html>
13. <https://ncuih.org/wp-content/uploads/Takeaways-Indigenous-Wellness-A-Conversation-on-Long-Covid-5.25.2023.pdf>
14. <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/covid-19/studies-detail-high-rates-long-covid-among-healthcare-dental-workers#>
15. <https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/long-covid-mecfs-and-the-importance-of-studying-infection-associated-illnesses>
16. <https://medlineplus.gov/Prognosis-for-myalgic-encephalomyelitis-and-chronic-fatigue-syndrome>
17. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41533-025-00460-8#data-availability>