

Carrington 2026 Testimony Carrington hb166 HENRIET

Uploaded by: Darrell Carrington

Position: FAV



CARRINGTON & ASSOCIATES, LLC

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**TESTIMONY - HOUSE BILL 166
PUBLIC HEALTH – HENRIETTA LACKS COMMISSION – ESTABLISHMENT
POSITION: FAVORABLE
HOUSE GOVERNMENT, LABOR, AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

Carrington & Associates, LLC supports House Bill 166. House Bill 166 establishes the Henrietta Lacks Commission to advance education, oversight, and awareness regarding the legacy of Henrietta Lacks and the use of HeLa cells in medical research. The bill also requires the Commission to report annually to the Governor and the General Assembly on its activities related to life sciences oversight and public education.

The story of Henrietta Lacks is deeply connected to Maryland and represents one of the most important and complex intersections of medical research, ethics, equity, and public trust. Establishing a formal statewide commission provides Maryland with an opportunity to lead in acknowledging this legacy while promoting responsible innovation in the life sciences sector.

From our work with public sector and community partners across Maryland, we understand the importance of policies that strengthen public confidence in research, promote ethical practices, and support educational outreach. Creating a dedicated commission helps ensure ongoing transparency, accountability, and engagement with communities that have historically been underrepresented or impacted by medical research practices.

House Bill 166 also reinforces Maryland's role as a national leader in biotechnology and life sciences. By promoting education, awareness, and oversight, this legislation supports a stronger and more responsible research ecosystem that benefits residents, institutions, and the broader public.

For these reasons, Carrington & Associates, LLC respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 166.

PPM--HB 166--FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Luke Allen

Position: FAV

Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections

Bill number: House Bill 166 - Public Health – Henrietta Lacks Commission – Establishment (Henrietta Lacks Commission of Maryland Act of 2026)

Hearing Date: February 10, 2026

Position: Favorable

Planned Parenthood of Maryland (PPM) supports *House Bill 166 - Public Health – Henrietta Lacks Commission – Establishment (Henrietta Lacks Commission of Maryland Act of 2026)*. The bill would create and establish the Henrietta Lacks Commission which will oversee “life sciences activities in the State and promotion of education of the life of Henrietta Lacks.”

There is no dispute – Henrietta Lacks is an American hero who changed the course of modern medicine through the contribution of her genetic cells. Johns Hopkins, the institution that treated Lacks and discovered these “HeLa” cells, [notes that they have been used worldwide](#) to “study the effects of toxins, drugs, hormones and viruses on the growth of cancer cells without experimenting on humans.” **These cells were taken from Lacks without her consent**, and over the years, “have generated millions of dollars in profit for the medical researchers who patented her tissue.”

While we are excited that this bill will promote and honor Lacks’ legacy, we also wish to emphasize the bill’s creation of a comprehensive body to “conduct bioethical oversight of life science activities” within Maryland. Planned Parenthood of Maryland supports higher levels of transparency and ethical oversight within the field and hopes that this bill will help guide future research by ethical standards.

We ask for a favorable report to honor the legacy of a woman whose life altered the course of cancer research and, therefore, health care itself. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Vice President of Public Affairs, Erin Bradley, at erin.bradley@ppm.care.

HB0166 – Written Testimony (FAV) – Sanjay Adireddi

Uploaded by: Sanjay Adireddi

Position: FAV

Written Testimony in Support of HB0166 (Henrietta Lacks Commission)

Position: Favorable (FAV)

Name: Sanjay Adireddi

Address: St. Louis, Missouri

Date: February 6, 2026

My perspective comes from two connected experiences: conducting animal-based research focused on circadian rhythms at Washington University in St. Louis as a high schooler and being introduced to bioethics through Missouri public education. In the lab, I saw firsthand how requirements such as humane endpoints shape how experiments are carried out. Years earlier, as a Missouri public high school student, reading *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* had already introduced me to the ethical dimensions of scientific research, giving my laboratory training useful context.

Impact on Life Sciences Research and Education

I believe one of the most significant long-term impacts of the Henrietta Lacks Commission is educational, as introducing students to the ethical history of biomedical research early in their academic careers helps develop ethical intuition before technical expertise. In my own experience, learning about Henrietta Lacks in a high school English course made later formal ethics training in research settings more meaningful.

Public Trust and Research Participation

Ethics education also plays a critical role in public trust. Openly acknowledging historical abuses in biomedical research signals institutional accountability, and that honesty matters for community trust and research participation, particularly in biomedical studies that rely on voluntary participation.

Conclusion

The long-term impact of establishing a Henrietta Lacks Commission is generational. By prioritizing education alongside oversight, the Commission can strengthen life sciences research and public trust. My own trajectory reflects the value of early bioethics education, and HB0166 provides a structured way to institutionalize this benefit for future generations.

For these reasons, I urge a **favorable report on HB0166**.

GENERATIONS.pdf

Uploaded by: David Sanders

Position: FWA

HENRIETTA LACKS GENERATIONS

74 YEARS OVERDUE



74 YEARS OVERDUE MURAL NEAR JOHNS HOPKINS RESEARCH LABS



74 YEARS OVERDUE MARYLAND STATE ANATOMY BOARD RECOGNITION



74 YEARS OVERDUE RECOGNITION OF DEBORAH LACKS PIONEER OF NARRATIVE MEDICINE



74 YEARS OVERDUE PRESENTATION OF FLAGS TO FAMILY



74 YEARS OVERDUE RECOGNITION OF HENRIETTA LACKS CATHOLIC FAITH



ALWAYS THE RIGHT TIME



hb0166 amendments - David Sanders - Outlook.pdf

Uploaded by: David Sanders

Position: FWA

Fw: HENRIETTA LACKS COMMISSION OF MARYLAND ACT

From David Sanders <manager@bocillc.com>
Date Fri 1/30/2026 8:30 AM
To ric.metzgar@house.state.md.us <ric.metzgar@house.state.md.us>
Cc Alfred Carter <carteralfred66@gmail.com>

Greeting Rick

Attn Paul

Please make the following changes to hb0166.

-Page 3 line #2 change the word MAY to SHALL (if appropriate)

-Page 3 line #8 change the word OVERSIGHT to GUIDANCE

David and Alfred

From: Puche, Adam <APUCHE@som.umaryland.edu>
Sent: Friday, January 30, 2026 12:39 AM
To: David Sanders <manager@bocillc.com>
Subject: RE: HENRIETTA LACKS COMMISSION OF MARYLAND ACT

Hi David,

I have some concern with the legislation as written, specifically provision (G)(1) which contains the word 'oversight' and is written imprecisely with too much breadth. If you replace 'oversight' with 'guidance' I think that would meet the intent.

Oversight is not an appropriate function of this commission, nor is the DC based O'Neill institute appropriate for oversight of Maryland functions, as that gets into an interstate governance issue that would derail the bill I suspect. Switching the word to 'guidance' would alleviate the concern.

Regards,

Dr. Adam C. Puche, Ph.D.
Chair, State Anatomy Board, Maryland Dept. of Health
Professor & Vice-Chair, Dept. of Neurobiology

University of Maryland School of Medicine
20 Penn St., Rm. 218E (mailing)
685 West Baltimore St., Rm. 280M (office)
Baltimore, Maryland, 21201
Ph. (410) 706 3530
<http://www.medschool.umaryland.edu/profiles/Puche-Adam/>
(he/him/his)

From: David Sanders <manager@bocillc.com>

Sent: Thursday, January 29, 2026 11:11 AM

To: Curtis Larsen <curtis.larsen@slcc.edu>; Samantha Faupula <samantha.faupula@slcc.edu>; Shareena Grant <sgrant@usccb.org>; Michael Preston <mprest12@jhu.edu>; Pamela Hamm <phamm4@jhmi.edu>; Douglas Robinson <dnr@jhmi.edu>; O'Lexy, Ruby <ruby.olexy@aacr.org>; Jen Klenk <jen.klenk@slcc.edu>; murvelldelpino@gmail.com; Puche, Adam <APUCHE@som.umaryland.edu>; activities-dir@homecresthouse.org; Wavesconsulting84@gmail.com; AnthonyKaDarrellThigpen@gmail.com; Andrew Van Noy <andrew@cancervax.com>; Janice Rogers <janice.rogers@slcc.edu>; Christina McWhinnie <cmcwhinn@slcc.edu>; Catherine Standiford <catherinestandiford@msn.com>; Stacy Stanford <stacy.stanford@cancer.org>; Harris, Brittany <brittany.harris@rx.umaryland.edu>; Annalee Foster <annaleefoster@hotmail.com>; Anja Aniere <anja.aniere@cancer.org>; James Williams <james.williams@cancer.org>; Whitlock, Kendal <kendal.whitlock@walgreens.com>; McDonald, Tom <tmcdonald@taftlaw.com>; Lynval Williams -MDH- <lynval.williams@maryland.gov>; Latrice Price <lprice@infinitelegacy.org>; leesha Johnson <ijohnson@infinitelegacy.org>; Nate Tinner-Williams <nate@blackcatholicmessenger.org>; Horace Clark <horace@blackdoctor.org>; Richard Ferguson <richard.ferguson@healthchoiceutah.com>; ric.metzgar@house.state.md.us; FREEMAN, Richard <freemanr@who.int>; Vincent Harrington -GOV- <vincent.harrington@maryland.gov>; Lee, Nita [BSD] <nlee@bsd.uchicago.edu> <nlee@bsd.uchicago.edu>; Arkia Wade <director@ncompanion.org>; Baysmore, Duane A. <dbaysmore@bcps.org>; Danielle Forbes (DHHS) <dforbes@utah.gov>; Morgan, Faith <faith.morgan@mail.house.gov>; Glory Johnson-Stanton <glory.johnson-stanton@slcc.edu>; Groesbeck Parham <professorparham@gmail.com>; Roderic Land <roderic.land@slcc.edu>; twrigh76@slcc.edu; Mullins, C. <daniel.mullins@rx.umaryland.edu>; Robinson-Shaneman, Barbara <brobinson@rx.umaryland.edu>; Baranski, Jan <jan.baranski@aacr.org>

Cc: Alfred Carter <carteralfred66@gmail.com>

Subject: HENRIETTA LACKS COMMISSION OF MARYLAND ACT

Greetings to all

I am pleased to correct my earlier report (right number wrong year) that the Henrietta Lacks Commission of Maryland Act HB0166 of 2026 that I helped to write is out of the gate and running.

Maryland Delegate Rick Metzgar has done a great job in advancing the legislation and keeping me updated on it. We will announce significant updates on it as they occur.

You can follow the bill at the link below:

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/hb0166?ys=2026RS>

The screenshot shows the Maryland General Assembly website with a navigation menu including MEMBERS, COMMITTEES, MEETINGS, LEGISLATION, BUDGET, LAWS, FLOOR ACTIONS, REDISTRICTING, and SEARCH. A search bar is present with the text "i.e. Bill search, keyword". The main content area features a progress bar for bill HB0166, divided into "Original Chamber" and "Opposite Chamber" sections. The "Original Chamber" section shows "1ST READING" and "REFERRAL TO CMTE" with a yellow checkmark. The "Opposite Chamber" section shows "1ST READING" and "REFERRAL TO CMTE". The "Passed Both Chambers" section shows "2ND READING", "3RD READING", "REVIEW IN ORIGINAL CHAMBER (IF NECESSARY)", and "CONF. CMTE". A "TO GOVERNOR" button is at the bottom of the progress bar. A sidebar on the left contains links for Charts, Senate, House, Publications, and About. The browser's address bar shows the URL "https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/hb0166?ys=2026RS".

All the Best

David

hb166-fav w amend.pdf

Uploaded by: Valerie Borek

Position: FWA

Valerie Ferrell, Cecil County. Favorable with amendment HB166

It is notable that a Commission created for “bioethical oversight” of the use of a cell line that was unethically harvested without informed consent would not include anyone ethically and morally invested in the HeLa cell lines, such as family members of Henrietta Lacks, or the Henrietta Lacks foundation. I believe that was an oversight, which is easily remedied by amending the bill to include someone in this category.

(HB 166) Government, Labor and Elections Informati

Uploaded by: Kate Thompson

Position: INFO



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Assistant Counsel

February 10, 2026

House Bill 166 – Public Health – Henrietta Lacks Commission – Establishment (Henrietta Lacks Commission of Maryland Act of 2026)

Testimony Before the Government, Labor and Elections Committee

The State Ethics Commission provides this informational written testimony to explain the impact of this proposed legislation on the agency. The proposed legislation requires that the Governor appoint a representative of the State Ethics Commission to serve on the Henrietta Lacks Commission. The State Ethics Commission has no jurisdiction over or expertise in the matters the Henrietta Lacks Commission will advise on, including bioethical oversight of life sciences activities in Maryland that involve human research or body, organ, and tissue donation for medical training. The State Ethics Commission respectfully requests that the Committee consider amending the legislation to remove the State Ethics Commission representative from the membership of the Henrietta Lacks Commission.

HB166_Henrietta Lacks Commission_LOI_FINAL_signed.

Uploaded by: Kathryn Feeley

Position: INFO



February 6, 2026

The Honorable Melissa Wells

Chair, Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
145 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: HB 166 – Public Health – Henrietta Lacks Commission – Establishment
(Henrietta Lacks Commission of Maryland Act of 2026)**

Dear Chair Wells:

The Maryland State Council on Cancer Control (Council) respectfully submits this letter of information regarding House Bill 166 - Public Health – Henrietta Lacks Commission – Establishment (Henrietta Lacks Commission of Maryland Act of 2026) (HB 166). The Council supports the bill’s intent to promote public awareness, education, and recognition of scientific contributions that have advanced biomedical research and public health.

At the same time, the Council wishes to share considerations related to the bill’s proposal to establish a commission with responsibilities that include providing bioethical oversight of research activities. The Council believes it is important for policymakers to be aware that extensive, well-established bioethical safeguards already govern biomedical and public health research in Maryland and nationally.

Existing Ethical Oversight Frameworks:

Biomedical research involving human subjects is already subject to multiple layers of rigorous, enforceable ethical and scientific oversight, including:

- Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) operating under federal regulations to protect research participants
- Scientific review committees that assess study design, scientific merit, and ethical considerations
- Federal and state compliance requirements governing human subject research
- Ongoing monitoring, reporting, and accountability mechanisms following study approval

Together, these existing mechanisms provide comprehensive oversight designed to safeguard participants, ensure ethical conduct, and maintain public trust in biomedical research. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), specifically 45 CFR 46 (HHS) and 21 CFR 56 (FDA), mandates that Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) protect human subjects



in research. These regulations define IRB membership, authority, procedures, and criteria for approval, ensuring ethical standards, risk mitigation, and informed consent are met. 45 CFR 46.111 requires the IRB to ensure risks are minimized, risks are reasonable in relation to benefits, subject selection is equitable, and privacy is protected. IRBs must have at least five members, including scientific and non-scientific members, and at least one person not affiliated with the institution.

Concerns Regarding Redundancy and Unintended Consequences:

The Council is concerned that assigning bioethical oversight responsibilities to a new commission may create redundancy with these established systems. The unnecessary burden of such a committee has the potential of hindering lifesaving research in Maryland. Introducing an additional layer of review could unintentionally make research approval processes more cumbersome, delay important scientific work, and create uncertainty regarding authority and decision-making. Such duplication may not meaningfully enhance protections beyond what current frameworks already provide.

The Council also notes that bioethical review requires specialized expertise and clearly defined authority. Without careful alignment with existing oversight mechanisms, a new commission-based review structure could complicate compliance and divert resources without improving ethical outcomes.

The Council offers this information in the spirit of constructive engagement and support for the bill's educational goals. We respectfully encourage consideration of approaches that promote awareness and public education while continuing to rely on existing, well-functioning ethical oversight systems.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Taofeek Owonikoko". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "O".

Taofeek Owonikoko, MD
Chair
Maryland State Council on Cancer Control