

**Testimony in SUPPORT (FAV) of HB 1316**  
HB1316 Public Health - Universal Health Care Program - Study and Commission  
House Health Committee | Mar. 10th, 2026  
Position: **FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Bagnall and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mike Walsh and I have been a resident of Anne Arundel County for 35 years in Shady Side, and I am writing in support of HB971 because at a time when our most vulnerable communities are under attack by our Federal government giving tax cuts to the rich at the expense of funding for life-saving health care, the state of Maryland is in a position to do better to serve its people. In order to do that, the time is now and we must pass this legislation and institute this Commission.

Moving to a truly universal single payer health care system where everyone is in, no one is left out, that centers the needs of patients and practitioners, and ensures that more of each dollar we spend is going to actual care makes sense. If it had existed in 2018 when I was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma and metastatic melanoma, I wouldn't have had to worry about how I would be able to afford the life-saving care that I needed. There's also broad public support for adopting the improved Medicare For All structure introduced in Congress, and six members of the MD Congressional delegation, including Sen. Van Hollen, are sponsors of the federal Medicare For All Act.

HB1316 will give the state a chance to analyze the numbers and the financial model that could support such a move. Colorado passed a similar measure last year and has raised the money to fund the financial analysis. HB1316 will establish the Commission on Universal Health Care to determine the feasibility of establishing a State universal health care program to provide health benefits to all residents of the State through a single-payer system. This will give us real and updated data that can best inform the state's decision.

Given the terrible state of our health insurance system, this Commission and its mission are needed now more than ever, and I hope that you all see its value as well. Please vote to advance HB1316 and urge your colleagues to do the same.

Thank you,

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