

SB 707

Anonymous

Montgomery County, MD

Position: FAVORABLE

The current danger standard prevented my loved one from getting timely psychiatric evaluation and treatment at Shepard Pratt. More than a year ago, after going off his medication, our adult son was voluntarily hospitalized at Sheppard Pratt. The psychiatrist there told us he could be helped by medication. When he refused medication, the hospital took him to a hearing, but we were not participants as they felt our information about his current inability to take care of himself and mental health history would not be relevant to an “imminent risk” determination. He was not found to be at “imminent risk” and was released to the street immediately — into the cold without a coat, wallet, or any money. The result was he became homeless for eight months and is still unmedicated and unable to take care of himself. SB 707 could have prevented this and given him back his life.

SB 707 strengthens the ability of providers and families to intervene earlier and more effectively to help prevent crises and protect individuals with severe mental illness (SMI) and their communities.

This bill ensures "danger" covers situations where a person with a severe mental illness (SMI) faces a substantial risk of:

- Causing bodily harm to themselves or others.
- Being unable to provide for basic needs including food, clothing, shelter, medical care, self-protection, or safety to a degree that risks serious harm, illness, or death.

SB 707 is a practical, compassionate step that will save lives, reduce suffering, incarceration and homelessness and strengthen public safety.

Please give a favorable report to SB707 as amended in the Senate, without changes.

Thank you,

Anonymous