

TO: The Honorable Heather Bagnall, Chair
Health

HB1481
Unfavorable

FROM: Leslie Ford Weber
Associate Director, Maryland Government Affairs

DATE: March 11, 2026

RE: HB1481: Tissue Banks and Hospitals – Autologous and Directed Blood Donations

Johns Hopkins opposes HB1481: Tissue Banks and Hospitals – Autologous and Directed Blood Donations

While directed donation was good practice 40 years ago during the height of the HIV epidemic in the US, measures are now in place to assure the safety of the blood supply. As noted by our accrediting agency, the Association for the Advancement of Blood and Biotherapies (AABB), “The blood supply in the United States is exceptionally safe, and patients’ blood needs, including those with complex blood type matching requirements, are routinely met through community volunteer blood donations and the work of highly skilled transfusion medicine professionals. Patients requiring specially selected units to meet their unique medical needs are transfused every day without special requests for directed donations.”

Johns Hopkins stopped supporting directed donation more than 10 years ago. We strongly believe that this bill would increase costs and bureaucracy without improving patient care. A directed or autologous unit costs about twice the amount of money to prepare and transfuse as our standard units. It has the likelihood of generating increased requests for autologous and directed blood donations that are medically unwarranted. This will require additional special handling outside the well-established processes in place now without improving patient care and also raising costs.

Accordingly, Johns Hopkins respectfully requests an UNFAVORABLE committee report on HB1481.