

Testimony-Opposition HB0637
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Good afternoon,

My name is Jill Kapper and I'm a lifelong resident here in Maryland. I'm here today requesting opposition towards HB0637. I'm here requesting opposition because this bill shifts health policy authority from elected lawmakers to unelected officials. The authoritative medical organizations that will be handed over this authority can not be trusted. Currently, major public health policies in Maryland are debated and voted on by elected representatives who are accountable to voters.

These trade organizations who would be given the power have proven to be biased towards protecting their health care provider members and their organizations (as they receive substantial pharmaceutical funding) versus protecting and improving the health of MD constituents. No threat to vaccine access exists even with the varying and changing recommendations across the various bodies including the CDC, and the "science" that the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) chooses has proven to be selectively biased.

Children's Health Defense, a nonprofit advocating for our children's health, and other plaintiffs have recently filed a racketeering "RICO" lawsuit against the AAP of similar nature to the Tobacco Industry case of the 1990s. The lawsuit accuses AAP of conflicts of interest and racketeering over the last few decades for receiving major funding from pharma and implementing schemes to incentivize high immunization rates while making repeated false claims about vaccine safety.

The ACOG continues to recommend COVID vaccines to pregnant women contrary to the longheld Golden Rule of protecting pregnant women and their unborn children under the precautionary principle. The ACOG and AAP are outliers compared to other organizations around the world as many utilize targeted recommendations or have even removed COVID vaccination recommendations for pregnant women and children. The bills' directive to follow the "generally accepted consensus within the scientific community" is subjective and biased. So-called "consensus" is too often manipulated by way of threats to medical licenses or livelihoods of medical researchers and professionals who have dared to question the "consensus science" or narrative.

These trade organizations assert that their recommendations are "grounded in proven science," but they consistently reject any reasonable challenge to that science which is inherently unscientific. Policies with broad impact on healthcare access and personal choice should be debated openly by the legislature. Maryland families deserve legislative oversight and transparency for decisions affecting healthcare. These trade organizations will not put Marylanders' needs first therefore I again request that you oppose HB0637.

Thank you

Jill Kapper