

SB 385/HB 637: Public Health - Recommendations for Immunizations, Screenings, and Preventive Services - Pharmacist Administration and Required Health Insurance Coverage **(The Vax Act):** Please vote to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Health Committee:

I am writing as a concerned Maryland resident to respectfully urge you to vote to **OPPOSE SB 385/HB 637**, known as “The Vax Act,” **unless it is amended to preserve legislative oversight of vaccine-related and non-vaccine related preventative medical policy decisions.**

As originally drafted, the bill would empower the Secretary of Health to issue independent statewide recommendations for immunizations, relying heavily on guidance from organizations such as the AAP, CDC/ACIP, and pharmaceutical manufacturers—**many of which have a direct financial interest in the products being recommended.** This would effectively allow significant public health policy changes to be made without any involvement or review by the General Assembly.

Vaccine policy and any other “...PREVENTIVE SERVICE...” **directly affects the health, rights, and freedoms of every Maryland family. Decisions of this magnitude belong in the legislative process—where public hearings, expert testimony from a broad range of perspectives, and open debate can occur—rather than being delegated solely to the executive branch or influenced primarily by entities that stand to profit from the resulting recommendations.**

While I appreciate the intent of the additional language, this language will pit the Maryland Secretary of Health against the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES. This will create confusion and will create lawsuits being filed against the Maryland Secretary of Health and the Maryland Department of Health since the criteria for these “medical services” are contradictory between state and federal requirements. Maryland cannot afford more lawsuits or expenditures at a time when we carry a deficit and Marylanders are struggling to pay for basic necessities of life, such as food, utility bills, etc.

Marylanders deserve a transparent, accountable, and conflict-free process for policies that impact public health. Keeping the General Assembly actively involved is essential to achieving that goal.

Therefore, I respectfully request that you **vote against SB 385/HB 637.** Maryland needs to ensure continued legislative oversight of vaccine recommendations and non-vaccine preventative medical services.

Thank you for your time and for your careful consideration of my concerns regarding this important matter.

With respect,

Trudy Tibbals