

March 12, 2026

HB1316 Public Health - Universal Health Care Program - Study and Commission

Sirein Awadalla

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Bagnall and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sirein Awadalla. I am a resident of Maryland – PG County. I live and work in this state. My husband works in this state too. My mother lives here. And my children live and go to school here as well. So, I'm speaking to you today as someone who is deeply invested in my community, And I implore you to pass HB.1316.

Like so many Marylanders and the majority of us around the US, healthcare is becoming financially difficult to attain. We have health insurance through my husband's work. Thank God for that. But I don't know how long we can hold on. Every month, we assess our bills, and our living expenses. And the numbers don't make sense.

When we look at how much money we spend on healthcare, compared to how much we have to pay for everything else, it doesn't make any sense. My husband and I both have advanced degrees, we're doing everything right, everything we ever knew to do. But every month, we're having to choose between which bills to pay just to make it to the next month. And the cost of healthcare is a big cloud hanging over our head.

In fact, I've had to use my mother's car since last summer because my car broke down and I haven't been able to put together enough funds to fix it.

I am not unique in this. You all know that this story is not rare. Pick out any person walking in the street and ask about their cost of living, and they'll tell you something similar to what I'm saying today. Ask anyone about the cost of healthcare – whether it's their monthly bill or that sudden massive expense when they have an emergency, and they'll tell you the same thing. That sudden medical bill can hit you like a heart attack. That bill can give you a shock worse than the medical problem you had to begin with.

You all know that's true! It's not a mystery. It's because the healthcare system we have is absolutely ridiculous. A nonsensical system that if you really think about it, has nothing to do with health. No other rich country would subject its people to a system this bad. Designed to favor private industry executives, and the stockholders who are purely in it to make MONEY. A rigged game that traps anyone who needs to stay in it, and spits you out if you can't afford to play! This healthcare system is not made for us. It's not made for doctors. It's not made for patients. And it's definitely not made for regular working people who find out every day that they cannot afford to pay.

It's a terrible system, and it needs to change. No more band aids when what we really need is surgery. No more timid sloganeering that isn't trying to get us anywhere real. We need bold action. And since we haven't overhauled the healthcare system at the federal level, why not do it right here in Maryland – Maryland can be a leader in that regard, take care of its residents and pave the way for

other states. If you all are serious about doing something to protect Marylanders, to create a system that really centers the health and livelihoods of your communities and the people who vote for you, then you would pass HB1316!

Thank you for your consideration,

Sirein Awadalla,
Upper Marlboro, MD