

Valerie Ferrell, J.D., Cecil County – Support HB1481

ORAL TESTIMONY STATEMENT

My name is Valerie Ferrell. I am a Cecil County mom, and spent a decade of my recent life as a medical caregiver for more than one family member. I am also the Policy Director of Stand for Health Freedom, a national nonprofit that represents one million advocates who stand for informed consent and patient's rights in medical care.

I drove to Annapolis today to express my strong support for HB1481. In this unprecedented age of rising distrust in medical authority, this bill is a homerun. It supports and honors **both** patients and doctors. It protects the practice of medicine and the rights of the patient. It has no fiscal burden on the state, and makes an accommodation for blood banks in the situation they claim the logistics of self, or directed donation is too difficult for them to navigate. I can only imagine protecting the right of a doctor and patient to choose self-, or direct donated blood would alleviate the strain on our blood supply as well by eliminating the administrative burden of sourcing blood for a particular patient.

This is the kind of bill where it's surprising it isn't law already. Wouldn't it be absurd if a patient couldn't bank their own blood at the direction of their doctor? Wouldn't it be heartbreaking and strange if a friend or family member was in a position to help with a blood donation, but hospital policy stood in the way? Shockingly, that can happen in Maryland right now.

This bill protects and honors a doctor's expertise and clinical decision-making, and a patient's right to follow doctor's recommendations. It strengthens doctor-patient relationships and eliminates unnecessary "red tape" so often found blocking access to medical care.

This is a rare nonpartisan issue in Maryland, and an easy way to show voters at home how Delegates are working for their rights. Maryland needs to be doing all we can to strengthen the doctor-patient relationship, and this bill shows that commitment.

I urge your favorable vote.