



Solve M.E.



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Dear Members of the Committee,

We, the undersigned organizations, write in strong support of Delegate Greg Wims' legislation to establish the **Maryland Long COVID Innovation Grant and Loan Program (HB0027)**

This bill offers Maryland a timely, strategic opportunity. In the face of a \$1 billion budget deficit, the state needs policies that generate economic returns. Governor Moore has made it clear that Maryland will grow its way out of the deficit by investing in high-impact sectors like healthcare, technology, and advanced manufacturing. This legislation fits squarely within that vision.

Positioning Maryland for Economic Growth

The Long COVID Innovation Program targets one of the largest unmet markets in healthcare today. Long COVID continues to affect a significant portion of the workforce and remains under-addressed in both research and treatment. This kind of translational science is efficient, cost-effective, and capable of producing early wins. It can seed new companies, create high-paying jobs, and bring in private-sector investment. It also positions Maryland as a national and global leader in post-viral innovation.

Keeping Top Talent and Infrastructure in Maryland

The program will help retain key scientific talent and strengthen Maryland's existing research infrastructure. TEDCO will administer the fund, drawing on its experience managing peer-reviewed, public-private grantmaking.

Addressing Cost Drivers in the State Budget

Beyond the growth opportunity, this bill helps address known cost pressures. In Maryland, finding cost-effective caregiving for family members strains the workforce. Long COVID has expanded this burden.

"Long COVID, defined by symptoms persisting three months post-SARS-CoV-2 infection, presents a significant global health and economic challenge, with global

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prevalence estimated at 36% (ranging from 1–92%)...[Long COVID is] estimated at an average annual burden of \$1 trillion globally and \$9000 per patient in the USA, with some individuals covering substantial out-of-pocket expenses. Annual lost earnings in the USA alone are estimated at approximately \$170 billion. Long COVID was associated with increased unemployment, financial distress, and work impairment for up to three years post-infection.” [David Cutler, Harvard University](#)

State Medicaid costs are another concern. In past years, Maryland faced unexpected cost overruns, likely linked to increased disability, job loss, and loss of private health coverage. Supporting Long COVID recovery at the research and innovation level could reduce downstream demand on public health programs.

A Smart Investment in Maryland’s Future

This legislation is about more than addressing a public health crisis. It is a forward-looking investment in Maryland’s economic future. It drives job creation, keeps top researchers working here, and helps mitigate known state cost burdens. The return on investment is clear.

We urge the General Assembly to prioritize this bill in the 2026 session and support Maryland’s leadership in innovation-driven recovery.

Sincerely,

The Below Signees:

Anisia Corona
Founder
DxTx

Eve
Founder, Physician
CompendiRx

Laurie Jones
Executive Director
MEAction

Arthur Mirin
California Chapter Leader,
CA Chapter, ME/CFS
The Myalgic Encephalomyelitis
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Emily Taylor
CEO & President
Solve M.E.

Bridget Collins
MEAction Maryland
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Billy Hanlon
ME & Long COVID Patient

Gillian Lizars
Long COVID Patient Advocate

Melinda Lipscomb
ME/CFS & Long COVID
Patient Advocate

Catherine Romatowski
Long COVID Patient Advocate

Jennifer Curtin
RTHM Clinic
Chief Medical Officer

Mia Anderson
ME/CFS Patient and Nurse

Elizabeth Pugh
Long Covid Patient Advocate

Kyrie-Inn Blue
ME/CFS Patient Advocate

Samuel Rhodehamel
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