Testimony in Support of HF3862:

Chair Freiberg, Rep. Boldon, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HF3862. I am unable to participate live because at the time of this hearing, my husband has a medical appointment to discuss whether or not his abnormal test results are an indication that his cancer has returned or metastasized. But he isn’t the person I am most worried about. The two of us are the primary caregivers of our son, David, who has multiple disabilities and comorbid conditions, one of which is chronic kidney disease resulting in kidney failure. Because he is not a candidate for dialysis nor transplant, we spent most of the past two years in isolation. If David contracts CoVid, he will probably die; his advanced directive prohibits intubation, and his diagnosis of Down syndrome and history of chronic respiratory and autoimmune issues makes him a likely candidate to experience complications.

While the rest of the world is resuming activities and gatherings that put my family at risk, I am worried that any decision to allow someone into our home may result in David or Paul’s deaths. Because our primary need for masks and testing is for other people who enter our home. And we need the therapists and direct support professionals to provide some of David’s in-home supports. But we can’t expect those individuals to continue to isolate as we do. The only thing we can do is provide the cleaning protocol, masks, and testing when needed to try to keep those outside support people from bringing illness to us.

People like my family need community support and consideration to continue to stay safe. We are still living and experiencing the pandemic as the rest of you were during shutdown. Please support this legislation to make our lives a little less stressful.

Sincerely,

Jean Bender

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