

# HB 5016 - Microchips

## Opposing Testimony

Good afternoon, Mr./Madame Chair. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I stand here in opposition to HB 5016.

Mr./Madame Chair, concern for safety is undoubtedly one of the highest concerns for us to evaluate. Our nation was built on a principle that the government was established to protect us threats both internal and external, and this is why we put in place checks such as the police force, seatbelt regulations, and worker safety standards. However, the concern for privacy rights must also be addressed. Mr./Madame Chair, we live in a world where our privacy is becoming increasingly obsolete, and this should be a warning call for us to reinforce people's autonomy and not to reduce it further. This bill walks us further into dissolving that fundamental safeguard, and in the next few minutes I would like to explain exactly how it does so.

We live in an age of cameras, smart device tracking, and so much more. In some cases, we have included trackers like ankle bracelets for cases of house arrest. But at no point have we considered making our location access so inseparable from our physical bodies, and the potential for abuse in this situation is far too dangerous. There's no stipulation in the bill about who has access to the location of the chipped individual. Suppose you have an incident with a youth with special healthcare needs or vulnerable adult who are related to a couple who has recently divorced. What happens if, heaven forbid, one of the divorcees chooses to hurt the child or elder out of retribution? Because of the microchip, this person will have immediate access to their location.

Beyond this, supporters of the bill have raised the notion of vulnerable adults leaving their care facilities. But have we ever thought why do they leave their care facilities? Usually, it is because they feel a distinct lack of autonomy and feel stressed by the environment they are in. How do you think this bill helps that? It doesn't. The fact is, it removes more autonomy for the individual while also adding the stress of being tracked all the time. This bill would not address the underlying issues of vulnerable adults wandering away. Instead, it merely treats one of the symptoms while continuing the epidemic of inadequate facilities.

Finally, have we considered the long-term consequences of this bill? The bill asserts that safety is more valuable than privacy. For now, that would be applied to a specific vulnerable population. But are we not all vulnerable? How far will this go? If we allow this trend of stripping individuals of our rights for the sake of safety, we will come to a point where anyone could be chipped and tracked by their parents, employers, or government officials. It will happen slowly, but if we start microchipping people now why would we ever stop? The concern is lifted and before long the last shred of valuing privacy will be gone. I urge this committee, please vote no on HB 5016. I will gladly take any questions at this time.

### Article

Elaine K. Howley (March 29, 2024). U.S. News, *Wandering and Elopement in Nursing Homes: What to Know*.