

HOUSE BILL 914

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HB 1022/99 - ECM

2000 Regular Session  
0lr0557

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By: **Delegates Conway, Bozman, W. Baker, Cane, Rudolph, McClenahan, and Walkup**

Introduced and read first time: February 11, 2000

Assigned to: Economic Matters

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A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Health Insurance - Interpreter Expenses for Hearing Impaired**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring carriers to reimburse health care practitioners under  
4 certain circumstances for the cost of services performed by an interpreter for an  
5 insured or enrollee who is hearing impaired or who is otherwise unable to  
6 communicate in spoken language.

7 BY adding to  
8 Article - Insurance  
9 Section 15-835  
10 Annotated Code of Maryland  
11 (1997 Volume and 1999 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
13 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article - Insurance**

15 15-835.

16 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
17 INDICATED.

18 (2) "CARRIER" MEANS:

19 (I) AN INSURER;

20 (II) A NONPROFIT HEALTH SERVICE PLAN;

21 (III) A HEALTH MAINTENANCE ORGANIZATION;

22 (IV) A DENTAL PLAN ORGANIZATION; OR

23 (V) ANY OTHER PERSON THAT PROVIDES HEALTH BENEFIT PLANS  
24 SUBJECT TO REGULATION BY THE STATE.

1           (3)     "HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER" MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS  
2 LICENSED, CERTIFIED, OR OTHERWISE AUTHORIZED UNDER THE HEALTH  
3 OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE TO PROVIDE HEALTH CARE SERVICES.

4     (B)     A CARRIER SHALL REIMBURSE A HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER FOR THE  
5 COST OF SERVICES PERFORMED BY A QUALIFIED INTERPRETER FOR AN INSURED OR  
6 ENROLLEE IF:

7           (1)     THE SERVICES OF THE INTERPRETER ARE NECESSARY BECAUSE OF  
8 A HEARING IMPAIRMENT OF THE INSURED OR ENROLLEE OR A FAILURE OF THE  
9 INSURED OR ENROLLEE TO UNDERSTAND OR OTHERWISE COMMUNICATE IN  
10 SPOKEN LANGUAGE;

11          (2)     THE SERVICES OF THE INTERPRETER ARE USED BY THE INSURED OR  
12 ENROLLEE IN CONNECTION WITH MEDICAL TREATMENT OR DIAGNOSTIC  
13 CONSULTATIONS PERFORMED BY THE HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER; AND

14          (3)     THE HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER IS DELIVERING COVERED  
15 SERVICES TO THE INSURED OR ENROLLEE.

16     SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
17 October 1, 2000.