



In Favor of HB 709  
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The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society

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Thank you, Chair Pendergrass, Vice-Chair Pena-Melnyk and distinguished members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee for the opportunity to submit written support for the passage of HB 709.

At The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, our mission is to cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and improve the quality of life of patients and their families. LLS exists to find cures and ensure access to treatments for blood cancer patients.

We come before you today requesting your full support of HB 709. HB 709 directs federal funding for the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE) to use in pursuing strategies to improve access to affordable, quality health care for small employers and their employees. Only 37% of small employers in Maryland currently provide health coverage for their employees, compared with 95% of large employers.<sup>1</sup>

This bill would not only improve coverage access for small business employees but allow small businesses to be more competitive in recruitment efforts for employees. Last year Maryland was named by CNBC as the most improved state for business<sup>2</sup> and in the top ten states for new, small business startups per capita in 2021.<sup>3</sup>

We appreciate the opportunity to offer support for HB 709 to ensure that all blood cancer patients and survivors, including those who own or work for small businesses, have the best possible access to affordable high-quality coverage options.

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<sup>1</sup> Agency for Health Quality and Research. Table II.A.2 Percent of private-sector establishments that offer health insurance by firm size and State: United States, 2020. [https://meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/data\\_stats/summ\\_tables/insr/state/series\\_2/2020/tia2.pdf](https://meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/data_stats/summ_tables/insr/state/series_2/2020/tia2.pdf) (Accessed November 23, 2021)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/07/13/infrastructure-makes-maryland-the-most-improved-state-for-business.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.simplybusiness.com/simply-u/articles/2021/09/states-most-new-small-businesses-capita/>