



Senate Bill 806
Maryland Health Benefit Exchange and Maryland Department of Health
– Health Care Coverage for Undocumented Immigrants – Report

Senate Finance Committee
March 8, 2023

Support

Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports SB 806 which would require the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange and the Maryland Department of Health to develop a report comparing options for offering affordable health care coverage to State residents who are ineligible for Medicaid, CHIP or qualified health plans due to their immigration status.

Inspired by the Gospel to love, serve and teach, Catholic Charities provides care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. For 100 years, Catholic Charities has accompanied Marylanders as they age with dignity, obtain empowering careers, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve economic independence, prepare for educational success and feel welcome as immigrant neighbors. We recognize the immense individual and public health benefits that occur when all residents have access to healthcare services.

Healthcare is a fundamental need of all humans. Whether it is primary preventative care, emergent care or care for a chronic condition, healthcare should not be kept from any Maryland resident. Yet over 275,000 Marylanders lack health insurance coverage due to eligibility exclusions. This means they delay care, visit clinics or incur costly bills.

At the Esperanza Center, Catholic Charities provides a range of healthcare services to our new neighbors without health insurance. Each day we see the damaging effects of blocking access to healthcare. While we attempt to fill the void, the problem is too large for clinics to tackle alone. It is time for Maryland to investigate a systematic solution. SB 806 begins that process.

For the reasons listed above, Catholic Charities of Baltimore appreciates your consideration, and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for SB 806.

Submitted By: Regan Vaughan, Director of Advocacy