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March 8, 2023

COMMITTEE: Senate Finance Committee

BILL: SB 806 – Maryland Health Benefit Exchange and Maryland Department of Health - Health Care Coverage for Undocumented Immigrants - Report

POSITION: Support

The Horizon Foundation is Howard County's community health foundation and the largest independent health philanthropy in the state of Maryland. We lead community change so everyone in Howard County can live a longer, better life.

The Foundation supports SB 806 – Maryland Health Benefit Exchange and Maryland Department of Health - Health Care Coverage for Undocumented Immigrants - Report.

SB 806 will help us better serve our immigrant community by studying and recommending different potential paths to quality, affordable healthcare coverage for those ineligible for the Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Insurance Program, or qualified health plans through the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange.

This bill, in combination with SB 365 – Health Insurance - Qualified Resident Enrollment Program (Access to Care Act), would provide uninsured immigrants access to health insurance that they need and deserve. SB 806 would provide a roadmap for potentially many paths to quality, affordable coverage for this population while SB 365 would begin the process for providing care for many through the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange. Both bills are warranted and deserve your support.

Health equity is a priority for the Horizon Foundation. Along with a broad coalition of health providers, grassroots advocacy organizations, and health institutions, the Foundation pressed for the successful adoption of the Healthy Babies Equity Act (Chapter 28 of 2022), which will extend comprehensive medical care and other health care services to certain undocumented pregnant women and their children.

Horizon Foundation Testimony
SB 806 – Maryland Health Benefit Exchange and Maryland Department of Health - Health Care
Coverage for Undocumented Immigrants - Report
March 8, 2023

Locally, the Horizon Foundation helped convene the Howard County Health Justice Coalition, a similarly broad collection of individuals and organizations. The Health Justice Coalition successfully secured \$1.3 million in local funding to ensure vital prenatal and postpartum care is available and affordable for uninsured and underinsured women and children in Howard County and that together we work to increase the percentage of children born at a healthy weight.

The Horizon Foundation recognizes the need to offer affordable and reliable healthcare to all Marylanders. SB 806 will help determine how we can better extend coverage to some of our most vulnerable residents. For this reason, the Horizon Foundation **SUPPORTS SB 806** and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.

Thank you for your consideration.