



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
88 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

HB 107

February 16, 2023

TO: Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Interim Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: House Bill 0107 – Maryland Health Benefit Exchange – Small Employers Special Enrollment Period and Marketing

POSITION: Support With Amendment

Chair Peña-Melnyk, Vice-Chair Kelly, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports with amendment** House Bill 0107.

HB 107 will create a special enrollment period on the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (HBE) for individuals employed by small employers (50 persons or less) that do not offer employer-sponsored health plans to employees and their dependents. This special enrollment period will provide these employees the opportunity to purchase private health insurance or enroll in Medicaid on the Exchange. This access to private health insurance during the enrollment period as well as the possibility of Medicaid enrollees transitioning to private insurance plans may offset increases in Medicaid enrollment and visits to local health departments.

In 2018, Baltimore City had just over 17,000 small businesses with 50 employees or less. Better health outcomes are strongly related to insurance coverage¹. Increasing access to health insurance for employees of small businesses would be a great gain for the city of Baltimore and the health of its residents. In that respect, **we request the committee to consider extending the deadline from 30 days to 60 days to allow for a longer enrollment period.**

With above suggested amendment, the BCA respectfully request a **favorable with amendment** report on HB 107.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/minorityhealth/chdir/2011/factsheets/insurance.pdf>