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Appropriations Committee

Subcommittees

Capital Budget

Chair, Transportation and the
Environment

Oversight Committee on Personnel



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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Independent Agency Health Insurance Option Act (HB 379)
Testimony of Delegate Marc Korman—Favorable with Amendments

Thank you Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee. I come before you today to discuss the **Independent Agency Health Insurance Option Act (HB 379)**. The legislation allows three quasi-governmental agencies not already covered to buy-in to the state's health insurance program. I learned about this issue while serving as a Speaker-appointed to the Governor's State Transparency and Accountability Reform (STAR) Commission, chaired by former Appropriations Committee member Andy Serafini.

The bill allows the Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC), the Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) and the Bainbridge Development Corporation (BDC) to opt in to the state's health insurance system if the Department of Budget and Management confirms that this is permissible under federal law. There is no net cost to the state through this bill, as the employer costs are covered by the agencies.

There are currently other quasi-government agencies that have the option to opt-in to the state plan for their employees. The Independent Agency Health Insurance Option Act simply extends that option to MCEC, MARBIDCO and BDC.

The Department of Budget and Management has requested 60 days, instead of 30 days, to conduct the review necessary to confirm that this is permissible under federal law. I believe that request is reasonable and we have requested the amendment.

MCEC, MARBIDCO and BDC are each valuable agencies and we must allow them to compete in attracting the best talent to work for the benefit our state by allowing their employees access to the state health insurance program. I urge a favorable report.