

March 2, 2022

TO: Members of the Senate Finance Committee
FROM: Sophie Crinion, MD
RE: Senate Bill 728 – Qualified Resident State Subsidy Program

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Dolores Kelly, Vice Chair Feldman, and members of the committee, I am writing to you in full support of Senate Bill (SB) 728, The Access to Care Act because this bill will allow hardworking members of our community to access health care and in doing so strengthen their families and communities.

One of my patients who would benefit from this law is Ms. R. I first met Ms. R shortly after the birth of her youngest child, after she suffered a complication of pregnancy that caused her kidneys to fail. Ms. R was hardworking - she cleaned houses and was raising her family in Baltimore. We planned to start her on peritoneal dialysis, a form of dialysis that is cheaper and can be done at home to minimize disruption to work and child care. Starting this form of dialysis typically does not require a hospital stay. However, Ms. R was uninsured and the cost of dialysis of any kind is unaffordable as an out of pocket expense. She ended up staying hospitalized for over a week, while her team of doctors and social workers navigated a bureaucratic nightmare. She desperately wanted to go home to be with her newborn child who had already been discharged from the nursery. But if we had sent her home without dialysis, she would have died.

Without insurance, Ms. R and her newborn missed the critical period of bonding right after birth. She had a wholly avoidable prolonged and expensive hospital stay, because without insurance, her doctors had no ability to provide the care she needed. Her whole family suffered during this time. Getting dialysis without insurance is an ongoing struggle.

Senate bill 728 will allow people like Ms. R the opportunity to access essential health care. When people like Ms. R are able to stay healthy, it has a ripple effect – her newborn, her other children, the community where she works and lives – all stand to benefit. I urge you to support Senate bill 728.