



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive
cball@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountymd.gov
FAX 410-313-3051

March 2, 2022

Senator Delores Kelley, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony **IN SUPPORT** of SB 632: Maryland Health Benefit Exchange - Small Business and Nonprofit Health Insurance Subsidies Program

Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Committee,

Last year, Howard County was awarded the National Culture of Health Prize from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This prestigious award reflects the work our Administration has done to optimize the health and well-being of our residents. However, there is always more that can be done to remove barriers and expand access to healthcare for all.

I commend Senator Hester for introducing Senate Bill 632 and her consistent advocacy for small businesses and employees in our community. By leveraging state and federal funding, this legislation would provide subsidies to small businesses and nonprofits while decreasing their cost of providing health insurance for their employees. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the need for accessible and affordable health care in our state.

Partnerships between government, public and private sector stakeholders will help Maryland residents receive the necessary medical care for themselves and their families. During the open enrollment period, more than 181,000 Marylanders enrolled in a Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE) qualified health plan, including 11,171 Howard County residents.

Our Administration will continue to promote initiatives that will expand access to healthcare and assist the small businesses and nonprofits that are essential to our communities. Dedicated funding from SB 632 would enable jurisdictions around the state to do the same.

I appreciate your partnership, consideration and urge a favorable report on SB 632.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive