

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SENATE BILL 632
Before the House Health and Government Operations Committee
By Jamal Lee, Executive Director of Breasia Productions
March 31, 2022

My name is Jamal Lee and I own a small business in Laurel Maryland. As a small business owner, offering health coverage to my employees is one of my top priorities. I know how important it is and I know it attracts a high caliber of employee when health coverages are in place. Being able to offer health coverage to employees is more important than ever in the economic climate created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Because our employees know we value them, they will in turn create a better product made in America. Unfortunately, it can be a difficult expense to cover. Small business owners list rising health care costs as one of their biggest challenges.¹ I supported the creation of the Small Business Health Options Program under the Affordable Care Act. The federal tax credits were absolutely necessary to balance the playing field when purchasing health coverage. Every dollar saved is a dollar earned. Small business owners are the back bone of this country and we are being taxed and stretched in every way imaginable.

I strongly urge the Committee to build on this program by passing SB 632, which would create a workgroup to determine how a program to help more small businesses offer health coverage to their employees would work. This bill is a good step forward and I look forward to contributing to the workgroup to help ensure that this program works well. I also appreciate that the bill commits the State to fund this program annually, beginning on July 1, 2023. As a small business owner building Maryland and contributing to the growth of our country I am hopeful that you will provide a favorable report to Senate Bill 632. Thank you for your consideration.

¹ Knoll, C., Thompson, J. As Congress Debates Social Spending Bill, National Survey Shows Small Business Owners Want Action to Combat Rising Healthcare and Prescription Drug Costs. Small Business for America's Future. November 8, 2021. <https://www.smallbusinessforamericasfuture.org/as-congress-debates-social-spending-bill-national-survey-shows-small-business-owners-want-action-to-combat-rising-healthcare-and-prescription-drug-costs>