



Indivisible: Central Maryland

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Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 610 Public Health – Commission on Universal Health Care

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Sheila Ruth

Committee: Health and Government Operations

Organization Submitting: Indivisible Central Maryland

Persons Submitting: Liz Enagonio, Advocate and Susan Radke, Advocate

Position: Favorable

Indivisible Central Maryland is an unpaid, volunteer grassroots organization of constituents residing in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County and Prince George’s County who are dedicated to protecting progressive and democratic values. **Indivisible Central Maryland strongly supports HB 610** which will establish a Commission to develop a plan for establishing a universal health care program that will provide health benefits to all Marylanders through a single-payer system.

The **Declaration of Independence** states that all are endowed by “their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness”. Throughout the decades this once narrow meaning of “all white men” expanded to be inclusive of all humans. Indivisible Central Maryland fervently believes that the right to life is a right that includes healthcare to sustain that life. Therefore, HB 610 provides the groundwork ensuring healthcare as a right; not a privileged benefit for those who can afford it.

HB 610 provides the groundwork to address disparities in our current healthcare system. Health outcomes in the United States vary greatly based on race, gender, income and location. This is particularly prevalent in our Maryland black and brown communities, and especially in those communities located in rural areas of our State.

Finally, passing HR 610 will benefit all Marylanders because the Commission can design a universal health care system to lower healthcare costs. We recommend that the bill include a statement where the State of Maryland negotiates all healthcare costs with providers to ensure that any out-of-pocket costs are low. This will keep cost inflation low, and lower incentives to maximize healthcare profits.

Indivisible Central Maryland urges the House of Delegate to pass HR 610 for the above stated reasons.

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