

March 3, 2022

Testimony on House Bill 1035

**Health Insurance - Qualified Resident State Subsidy Program (Access to Care Act)
House Health and Government Operations Committee**

Position: Favorable

Maryland Nonprofits is a statewide association of more than 1300 nonprofit organizations and institutions. We urge you to support House Bill 1035 to assure that all Maryland residents have access to affordable quality health insurance coverage, and therefore, without regard to financial situation, “access to care.”

The COVID-10 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of health being readily available to our entire population. Under the Affordable Care Act and with Maryland’s Health Benefit Exchange we have taken great strides toward that goal. But the disproportionate impact of COVID among immigrant and undocumented individuals and families shows that we have not done enough.

House Bill 1035, subject to certain approvals and a waiver, will close a gap in coverage and access, by extending coverage to persons currently not eligible for assistance from the Exchange. Most Marylanders would agree that access to care is a basic human right, and the action proposed in this legislation is in fact a moral imperative.

But we should also have learned by now that, in the common interest of us all, effective protection of public health needs to include all of the public.

We urge you to give House Bill 1035 a favorable report.

