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Patrick Moran - President

**Testimony**  
**HB 1035 – Health Insurance – Qualified Resident State Subsidy Program**  
**(Access to Care Act)**  
**Health and Government Operations Committee**  
**March 3, 2022**  
**FAVORABLE**

AFSCME Council 3 supports HB 1035. This legislation the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE) to submit a federal waiver application to establish a subsidy program for noncitizens who are seeking health insurance and coverage under the MHBE. This important legislation closes the health care coverage gap for Marylanders who already seek care in the health care systems in the state, but do not have insurance.

Our members in the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) provide care to individuals at clinics across the state in our Local Health Departments and in long-term care settings at 12 MDH facilities statewide. They care for undocumented individuals in both of these settings on occasion and do so without regard to immigration status. Our members have professional and ethical obligations to care for all individuals before them indiscriminantly and they are proud to be able to provide this care during a patient's most vulnerable time.

We support efforts to expand health care coverage to all Marylanders because it will save on health care costs in the long run. With expanded access, patients can get intervention earlier saving the system money from even more costly procedures or hospitalizations down the line. As we have also learned during this pandemic, matters concerns public health impact an entire community and not just those who are documented or have insurance. It benefits the public health of the entire community if more residents have access to health care, not fewer.

Our members want to provide quality care to all Marylanders who need it. HB 1035 is a good bill, and helps to expand health care coverage to more Marylanders. We urge the committee to provide a favorable report.

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An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.  
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