

Testimony in Support of HB610
Public Health - Commission on Universal Health Care
March 10, 2022

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

I am a resident of Baltimore City and a member of Progressive Maryland's Healthcare Task Force. I write to you today to express my strong support for HB610, which would establish a Commission on Universal Healthcare to develop a plan for a statewide single-payer healthcare system that provides coverage for all Maryland residents.

I support HB610 because insufficient healthcare coverage leaves individuals like my parents vulnerable, especially in the midst of a pandemic.

Recently, Johns Hopkins made the decision to cut nearly 6,000 seniors in Baltimore City and Calvert County from its Hopkins Medicare Advantage plan. Like other individuals across the state, this left my parents scrambling to find healthcare coverage.

Though my parents have now found new coverage, the out-of-pocket and prescription costs for their medical, dental and vision are so high, my mother who retired in 2020 from Johns Hopkins Hospital is considering returning to work. My sister and I have cut our paychecks so that we can cover our mother's healthcare needs.

I also would like to uplift my aunt's story. She was receiving care at a nursing home facility. Because Hopkins dropped her from their Medicare Advantage plan, she could no longer afford the treatment at the facility and was sent home. Shortly afterwards, she passed away.

Lack of full healthcare coverage flips families like mine upside down with deadly consequences.

I will not get my aunt back. However, my fight right now is to make sure that my parents have the proper healthcare coverage that they need to keep them here with me and their grandchildren.

I urge a favorable report, with no weakening amendments, on HB610.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Jones, MPA
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