



Testimony to the Senate Finance Committee

SB 625: Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Maryland Children's Health Program - Continuous Eligibility

Position: Favorable

March 14, 2023

The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
cc: Members, Senate Finance Matters

Honorable Chair Griffith and Members of the Committee:

Economic Action Maryland (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) is a people-centered movement to expand economic rights, housing justice, and community reinvestment for working families, low-income communities, and communities of color. Economic Action Maryland provides direct assistance today while passing legislation and regulations to create systemic change in the future.

We are writing in support of SB 625 and urge a favorable report.

SB 625 requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to adopt 12-month continuous eligibility for children under Medicaid and the Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP). It also requires MDH to apply for a waiver to adopt a 24-month continuous eligibility.

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, federal law required states to keep Medicaid beneficiaries enrolled during the state of emergency. In 12 states, the number of uninsured children declined significantly during this time period. Unfortunately, in Maryland, the number of uninsured children **increased** over the pandemic.

In [2019](#), there were 48,000 uninsured children in Maryland but by 2021, that number had increased to 62,000 children without insurance, placing Maryland 31st in the country in terms of insuring our children. Maryland children without insurance are concentrated in households earning \$34,304 or under, with Hispanic households comprising 10.2% of those without insurance for their children.

Our children can't wait for health insurance. SB 625 ensures that low-income and working families have continuous coverage so that no family loses coverage. This will enable MDH to focus on enrolling new applicants rather than having to spend time re-enrolling current ones.

For all these reasons, we support SB 625 and urge a favorable report.

Best,

Marceline White  
Executive Director

