



Testimony on SB365/HB588  
Access to Care Act of 2023

**Position: Favorable with Amendments<sup>1</sup>**

To Chair Griffith and Members of the Senate Finance Committee; Chair Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Health & Government Operations Committee,

My name is Alexa Rodriguez I am a healthcare worker and a member of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. We are the largest healthcare workers union in the country, with over 10,000 members in Maryland and Washington DC. Our union supports SB365 – Access to Care Act – and we urge the Committee to issue a **favorable with amendments** report. This legislation will ensure immigration status is not a barrier for Marylanders to accessing healthcare and will create a subsidy program so healthcare can be more affordable.

**I'm an immigrant. When I arrived in the US, I was undocumented. I am a citizen now. When I was undocumented it was challenging for me to access healthcare for HIV. I didn't have a work permit so I couldn't get a job. I was homeless. I didn't have access to medical care on time. A lot of people have been in this country for decades working, paying taxes, being a good person, but they still can't get healthcare. An undocumented person I know had to go to the emergency room and got a lot of medical debt. They can't access a specialist for their heart condition. It's heartbreaking for me because I can't financially support this person. Scammers take advantage of undocumented people by tricking them in to buying "insurance" that is a scam – so undocumented people need access to Medicaid, so they don't accidentally purchase fake insurance. Language barrier and accessibility to information is challenging too.**

**Without barriers to affordable healthcare, we will be healthier and more productive. We will be human. Don't forget that we are people, and we are part of this country because we contribute to this country, so we should get the same rights.** Please vote **YES** on this life saving legislation to expand access to Medicaid to all Marylanders regardless of immigration status and to establish a subsidy program so newly covered patients can afford healthcare.

In Unity,  
Alexa Rodriguez

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<sup>1</sup> **Proposed Amendment:** Section V - add a number A (5): "That provides State premium assistance and cost-sharing reduction subsidies for Qualified Residents that seek to attain the same level of health plan affordability and limit on out-of-pocket costs experienced by all other health plan purchasers on the exchange."

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