



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk, Chair
Delegate Ariana B. Kelly, Vice Chair
Health and Government Operations Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus

DATE: February 23, 2023

RE: HB0111 Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Program, and Social Services Programs – Eligibility and Enrollment

The MLLC supports HB0111 Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Program, and Social Services Programs – Eligibility and Enrollment, 2023

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB0111.

Marylanders who are eligible for safety net services currently have to complete and renew multiple applications annually which are reviewed by different agencies. The result is administratively burdensome to those completing the application and inefficient from a state agency perspective. Because of this complicated process, many Marylanders are not receiving or not renewing Medicaid or energy assistance benefits. A majority of the needed documents to verify energy assistance income-eligibility are also collected for SNAP or Temporary Cash Assistance, and similar documents are needed for Medicaid enrollment. Hispanic communities make up approximately 12% of Maryland's population, and continue to have the highest uninsured rates of any racial or ethnic group within the state. In reporting the findings of the American Community Survey, the Kaiser Family Foundation highlighted that in Maryland 21.4% of Hispanics were uninsured, as compared to 3.8% for non-Hispanic whites.² Based on Census Bureau data for 2021, 65,000 uninsured state residents receive SNAP - nearly one in five uninsured Marylanders (17%). Additionally, 14.0% of Hispanic or Latino Marylanders live below the poverty line,² and according to the Maryland Food Bank, nearly half of Hispanic residents experience both new and persistent food insecurity.³

HB0111 will streamline and create one eligibility process, allowing additional families to be served with little to no administrative cost increases. This will greatly impact the participation of Latino and immigrant families who face unique obstacles to accessing public assistance when they need it.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB0111.

¹ [Uninsured Rates for the Nonelderly by Race/Ethnicity | KFF. \(n.d.\). Kaiser Family Foundation.](#)

² [Klingenmaier, L., & Mersky, S. \(2018\). Maryland Poverty Profiles. Maryland Alliance for the Poor.](#)

³ [Sturm, D. \(2022\). Food Insecurity in Maryland. Maryland Food Bank.](#)