

HB0588 ___ Catherine Bergmann ___ FAW

2/23/23

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TESTIMONY ON HB0588 POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS
Health Insurance Qualified Resident Enrollment Program (Access to Care Act)

TO: Chair Pena-Melnyk and members of the Health and Governmental Operations Committee

FROM: Catherine Bergmann, PhD, MPH

My name is Catherine Bergmann. I have been a resident of District 22 for over 30 years. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB0588 with amendments, the Health Insurance Qualified Resident Enrollment Program, Access to Care Act.

I care about immigrant rights because my parents were both immigrants; they escaped from Nazi Germany. Even as they escaped to the safety of this country, their problems did not end. I want immigrants today in Maryland to have an easier time than my family did.

I also care about expanding access to health care in Maryland because of my neighbors. On my block there are several families from Central America, and they are the best neighbors anyone could ask for. They also work really hard. The adults have two jobs, and they all pay taxes. I feel bad that they may not have the access to health care that I have, just because of where they were born.

Finally, as a clinical psychologist and retired health care provider, I want to make sure health care is accessible to the approximately 275,000 undocumented people in Maryland. If we have learned anything from the Covid-19 pandemic, it is that the health of each of us affects the health of all of us.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable with amendments report on HB0588.