

HB 588

Health and Government Operations

Unfavorable

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My name is Amy Waychoff and I have lived in Montgomery County for over 35 years. Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I am opposed to HB 588, Health Insurance - Qualified Resident Enrollment Program (Access to Care Act), because it provides a benefit to individuals who are in the country illegally. Historically, U.S. immigration policy allowed for controlled entry to people who would not pose a burden to the U.S. taxpayer. Time and time again, the Maryland General Assembly has turned that philosophy on its head. Providing these benefits draws ever more illegal aliens into the state, which in turn increases taxes for middle class Marylanders.

In this particular bill, it is proposed that illegal aliens receive health insurance through the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MBHE). And this benefit comes at a hefty price: According to the bill's Fiscal and Policy Note, "MBHE expenditures increase by at least \$550,000 in FY 2025 for initial implementation costs, plus an additional indeterminate but significant amount to provide State premium assistance and cost sharing reductions." Moreover, the note makes it clear that the purpose of the bill is to provide subsidized health insurance to illegal aliens who are not eligible for

Medicaid, the federal premium tax credit, the Maryland Medical Assistance Program, and other programs.

This bill would also provide this subsidized insurance to people who are incarcerated “pending disposition of charges.” For all of these reasons, please give HB 588 an unfavorable report. Thank you.