



Delaware-Maryland Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony prepared for the
Health and Government Operations Committee
on
House Bill 111
February 7, 2023
Position: **Favorable**

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity for my community to support sufficiency and well-being for all. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are a faith community with three judicatories in our State.

Sufficient livelihood and access to appropriate and affordable health care for all people have been adopted for moral deliberation within our community, and in our public discourse (ELCA, "Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All," 1999; "Caring for Health," 2003).

Maryland has done good things with the mechanism of notification about access to State social programs through filings and applications (for example, *House Bills 234 and 252* of 2022). **House Bill 111** would extend that administrative instrument across Maryland's human services programs with convergent eligibility standards. It would make sign-up for social services such as Medicaid, MCHP, SNAP, EUSP and MEAP, *et al*, a single exercise with categorical eligibility, one standard for enrolling in all the available services when qualified for any single one.

The services and eligibility for them are established (and we appreciate that the bill expands eligibility in EUSP). Yet there remain people without adequate medical care, or nutrition, or safe shelter, who do not, or cannot apply. Multiple application processes with annual renewal requirements, asking for the same information, amounts to a barrier for eligible clients of State services. It also creates an administrative burden for the State.

House Bill 111 would bring the programs to eligible clients in an efficient and effective manner, illustrated by prior "express lane" State initiatives that have increased participation. Because of that, and because of the good it would do for residents of the State, we urge your favorable report.

Lee Hudson