

Public Health - Commission on Universal Health Care

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Ruth

Committee: Health and Government Operations Committee

Organization Submitting: Lower Shore Progressive Caucus

Person Submitting: Jared Schablein, Chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0329 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus to express our strong support for HB0329, which would establish a Commission on Universal Health Care in Maryland. As an organization committed to advocating for policies that improve the lives of all people, the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus believes that healthcare is a fundamental human right and a critical component of a just and equitable society.

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the stark disparities in our healthcare system, with rural areas, communities of color and low-income households bearing the brunt of the pandemic's health and economic impacts. It is now more important than ever to ensure that every Maryland resident has comprehensive health care services, regardless of their income, race, gender, or geographic location.

The Commission on Universal Health Care would be an important step towards achieving this goal. It would bring together stakeholders from across the healthcare industry, including healthcare providers, insurers, policymakers, and advocates, to develop a comprehensive plan for implementing universal healthcare in Maryland.

Such a plan would help to ensure that all Maryland residents have access to the healthcare services they need to stay healthy, prevent and manage chronic conditions, and address acute medical issues. It would also help to reduce healthcare costs, improve health outcomes, and promote health equity.

We strongly urge the Health and Government Operations Committee to give a **favorable** report on HB0329 so we can take a critical step towards achieving a healthcare system that is accessible, affordable, and equitable for all residents of our great state.