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Written Testimony

Senate Bill 26 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Program, and Workgroup on Low-Income Utility Assistance House Health and Government Operations Committee – March 21, 2023

Support

Background: Senate Bill 26 as amended in the Senate would require the Maryland Department of Health to establish an Express Lane Eligibility Program by January 1, 2025, to enroll individuals, based on certain eligibility, in the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and the Maryland Children's Health Program; and require the Workgroup on Low-Income Utility Assistance to submit a final report to certain committees of the General Assembly on its findings and recommendations, including recommended legislative and regulatory changes.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council represents The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore and all of its agencies. This includes Jewish Community Services (JCS), which provides social services to low-income Marylanders.

Maryland has one of the highest rates of deep poverty in the country, with almost 50% of those living in poverty being considered as living in deep poverty. Based on 2021 data from the Census Bureau, this legislation would help over 60,000 uninsured Marylanders get the health coverage they need, including 23,000 Black Marylanders and 28,000 Latinos.

Other states have already adopted programs that help children enroll in Medicaid. In fact, more than 30,000 uninsured children in [Louisiana](#) and 90,000 uninsured children in [South Carolina](#) have been enrolled in Medicaid based on SNAP receipt, without needing to complete paperwork.

In short, this legislation would assist uninsured Marylanders; improve health equity; and prepare the General Assembly for future legislation needed to address low-income assistance. **For these reasons, the Baltimore Jewish Councils asks for a favorable report on SB26.**

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.