

Public Health - Healthy Maryland Program - Establishment

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Acevero

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 HB0025 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus, which aims to establish the Healthy Maryland Program as a public corporation and a unit of State government to provide comprehensive universal single-payer healthcare services for all residents of the State by January 1, 2025.

As Chair of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus, we believe that healthcare is a basic human right, and it is essential that all Marylanders have the care they need to stay healthy and thrive. Unfortunately, the current healthcare system is not serving everyone equally, and too many individuals and families are unable to afford necessary medical treatment, prescription medications, or preventative care.

The Healthy Maryland Program will ensure that all Maryland residents have comprehensive healthcare services, regardless of their income or pre-existing medical conditions. By eliminating the financial barriers to healthcare, this program will help prevent chronic diseases, reduce healthcare costs, and improve the overall health and well-being of our community.

We support the provisions outlined in the bill, including those related to eligibility, participation by and payments to health care providers, benefits, payroll premiums, funding, and collective negotiations with health care providers. We believe that these provisions will ensure that the program is affordable, sustainable, and able to deliver high-quality healthcare services to all Maryland residents.

We urge you to give a **favorable** report on HB0025 and take an essential step towards creating a more equitable and just society for all Marylanders.