

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 705
Health Insurance - Qualified Resident Enrollment Program (Access to Care
Act)
Senate Finance Committee

February 21, 2024

Dear Honorable Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee,

Good afternoon. My name is Tihitina Aytenfisu and I am a first-year medical student at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. We serve the residents of Baltimore and greater Maryland area. I am testifying today in support of SB 705 - Access to Care Act. The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of Johns Hopkins University or the Johns Hopkins Health System.

I have been a resident of Maryland for the last fifteen years. My family immigrated from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2009 to Rockville, Maryland seeking political asylum. As a first generation immigrant myself, and the daughter of refugees, I have encountered firsthand how difficult it can be to navigate the health care system. Even when I had reached English language proficiency, it was difficult to connect with the right healthcare providers and understand the billing system. Giving undocumented immigrants the access to subsidized insurance would be extremely valuable in helping bridge this difficult gap, which is why I am testifying here today.

Growing up in Maryland and training to be a physician in Maryland, I want to be in a state that allows all members of my community to receive affordable healthcare. The Access to Care Act would be a big step forward in realizing this ideal.

Sincerely,
Tihitina Aytenfisu