

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB705: Health Insurance - Qualified Resident Enrollment Program  
(Access to Care Act)**

Senate Finance Committee

February 21, 2024

Dear Honorable Chair Beidle, and Members of the Committee,

I would first like to thank you for your time. My name is Olivia Ding, I'm a Junior at Poolesville High School and a resident of Legislative District 9A, located in Montgomery County. I am one of the core leaders of Students FAIR, a youth-led organization of students all across MCPS that support and fight for the rights of immigrants. I am testifying today to support SB705, which, if passed, would bridge the healthcare gaps and disparities faced primarily by the immigrant population in Maryland.

As the daughter of two immigrants, I have witnessed first-hand the struggles my parents have faced trying to access healthcare insurance. Both of them work long and hard hours as laborers, performing the work that others may choose to shield their eyes from. My parents represent the millions of immigrants who are the backbone of this country, and yet, receive very little in return. It is heartbreaking watching two people who care so deeply about their country grapple with the idea of going to work everyday unprotected, unsafe, and insecure from their dangerous work environments.

I am beyond honored to have access to healthcare insurance; it is a feeling of security that I am privileged enough to have blanket me. However, this is not a possibility for the 300,000 undocumented immigrants in Maryland. This is why it is absolutely crucial for the Maryland General Assembly to fight for and pass the Access to Care bill.

I implore the committee to please consider the great impacts SB705 will have on all Marylanders seeking access to healthcare insurance who are unable to, simply because of their immigration status. It is your job to protect every constituent in the state of Maryland; please do not fail us.

Sincerely,  
Olivia Ding