



10015 Old Columbia Road, Suite B-215
Columbia, Maryland 21046
www.mdac.us

Committee: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill Number: HB 728 – Health Insurance – Qualified Resident Enrollment Program (Access to Care Act)

Hearing Date: February 8, 2024

Position: Support

The Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC) strongly supports *House Bill 728 – Health Insurance – Qualified Resident Enrollment Program (Access to Care Act)*. The bill simply allows people who are undocumented to purchase health and dental insurance through the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange. There are no up-front costs to the state, but there will be savings. CareQuest Institute for Oral Health, in partnership with MDAC, has been monitoring costs for emergency department visits for dental conditions that should have been treated earlier. In 2021, these emergency room visits cost \$2.1 million for uninsured individuals.ⁱ Some of these costs could have been avoided if more undocumented people could get coverage.

We ask for a favorable report. People should be able to use their own earnings to purchase health and dental insurance. We do not have restrictions that keep undocumented people from purchasing other basic goods and services, such as food, child care, and even homes. From a health care, economic, and equity perspective, it only makes sense to allow people to use their own earnings to purchase health and dental insurance. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

ⁱ https://www.mdac.us/file_download/inline/2ed08573-f47a-47b4-a535-4bffd815823e

Optimal Oral Health for All Marylanders