

**Baptist Ministers' Night Conference of
Baltimore *and* Vicinity (BMNCBV)**
5405 York Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21212, (443) 386.4739



**TESTIMONY IN FAVOR WITH AMENDMENT OF HOUSE BILL 728
BEFORE THE HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
BY REV. DR. SANDRA CONNER, PRESIDENT, BMNCBV
FEBRUARY 8, 2024**

Chair Peña-Melnyk, Vice-Chair Cullison, and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in favor of HB 728, which would allow Marylanders to purchase private health coverage from Maryland Health Connection regardless of immigration status. Special thank you to Vice Chair Cullison for sponsoring this legislation.

Maryland has made major progress in creating access to quality, affordable health care since the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, cutting the rate of uninsured in our state from 13% to 6%. Now we must go from 6% to 0%. It is a public health issue when uninsured Marylanders cannot access to the health care they need. Often uninsured Marylanders have to wait until their health issues bring them to the emergency room, which increases hospital wait times and also increases uncompensated care. Uncompensated care drives up health insurance premiums for everyone. The Access to Care Act will help ensure Marylanders can purchase coverage, regardless of immigration status, and also help stabilize premiums and improve hospital wait times for ALL Marylanders.

We thank you in advance for your actions towards HB 728.

Rev. Dr. Sandra Conner

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