

**Health and Government Operations Committee
February 7, 2024**

**House Bill 728: Health Insurance Qualified Resident Enrollment Program –
Access to Care Act**

****Support****

The Maryland Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers represents social workers statewide. We strongly support House Bill 728: Health Insurance Qualified Resident Enrollment Program – Access to Care Act. The impact of this bill is as follows:

- Zero cost to the state of Maryland;
- Ensures immigration status is not a barrier for Maryland residents to purchase a health insurance plan; and
- Requires the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to submit a waiver application to the federal government.

It is a known fact that health outcomes for immigrants are very poor as they tend to not seek out care due to their fear of being asked about their immigration status. We want them to know and understand that in the state of Maryland that is not the case. They live in an open and welcoming state that cares about their well-being.

We ask the General Assembly to expand immigrants' access to care here in Maryland. We already have the infrastructure in place and expanding access to health coverage will result in a healthier Maryland. Implementing the Qualified Resident Enrollment Program will help in getting people into the appropriate health care program of their choosing by unlocking barriers.

We ask for a favorable report.

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