



**House Health & Government Operations Committee
March 21, 2024**

**Senate Bill 705: Health Insurance Qualified Resident Enrollment Program –
Access to Care Act**

****Support****

The National Association of Social Workers – Maryland Chapter is the professional organization representing over 3,000 social workers statewide. We strongly support Senate Bill 705: Health Insurance Qualified Resident Enrollment Program – Access to Care Act. This bill will ensure immigration status is not a barrier for Maryland residents to purchase health insurance and will cost the state no money.

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.

Karessa Proctor, BSW, MSW
Executive Director, NASW-MD

Philip A. Pratt, MSW, ACSW
Legislative Committee, Co-Chair