



**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

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The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) strongly supports *House Bill 728 – Health Insurance – Qualified Resident Enrollment Program (Access to Care Act)*. Under the legislation, the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange would allow individuals who are undocumented to purchase insurance using their own monies.

If families can purchase coverage, they will be far more likely to access behavioral health services.<sup>i</sup> We cannot afford to deny people the opportunity to purchase health insurance. The cost of untreated mental illness is staggering because of the downstream health, educational, and social costs.<sup>ii</sup> This legislation can only yield positive results. It requires no state investment, yet will result in more people being able to obtain the coverage they need to ensure their families wellbeing.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6477535/>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama-health-forum/fullarticle/2810448>