



2/11/24

Maryland House of Representatives
Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee:

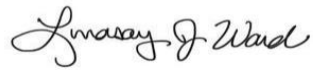
On behalf of the pediatric nurse practitioners (PNPs) and fellow pediatric-focused advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP) Chesapeake Chapter, I am writing to express our **support of HB728 Health Insurance - Qualified Resident Enrollment Program (Access to Care Act)**.

This bill would allow those residents who are undocumented and uninsured to purchase health insurance. Like any US citizen, migrants will require access to health care. The countries most current migrants come from, along with the living circumstances they were facing in their home country, puts them at a higher risk of a suboptimal health status. Chronic conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and malnutrition are prevalent among migrants. In addition, their current situation puts them at higher risk of mental health illnesses, such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse. Undocumented immigrants are not eligible for federally funded public health insurance programs, including Medicare, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). To care for the lower income residents, including undocumented immigrants, the U.S. relies on a patchwork system of safety-net providers, including public and not-for-profit hospitals, federally qualified community health centers (FQHCs), and migrant health centers. Immigrants should be able to purchase health insurance. This is economically prudent because it applies public health interventions to a vulnerable population, thereby diminishing the burden of illness and preventing higher costs to the community.

For these reasons the Maryland Chesapeake Chapter of NAPNAP extends their support to **HB728 Health Insurance - Qualified Resident Enrollment Program (Access to Care Act)**.and requests a favorable OR unfavorable report.

The pediatric advanced practice nurses of your state are grateful to you for your attention to these crucial issues. The Chesapeake Chapter of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners membership includes over 200 primary and acute care pediatric nurse practitioners who are committed to improving the health and advocating for Maryland's pediatric patients. If we can be of any further assistance, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Chesapeake Chapter President, Lindsay J. Ward at 410-507-3642 or at mdchesnapnpleg@outlook.com.

Sincerely,



Lindsay J. Ward MS, BSN, CPNP-PC, IBCLC
Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner- Pediatric Primary Care
International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)
Chesapeake Chapter President

Evgenia Ogordova

Evgenia Ogordova-DNP
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)
Chesapeake Chapter Legislative Chair