



**Delaware-Maryland Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony Prepared for the  
**Health and Government Operations Committee**  
on  
**House Bill 1324**  
February 26, 2025  
Position: **Favorable**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak for access to health care in Maryland. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a faith community with congregations in every region of our State.

Our community has advocated for access to appropriate, adequate, and affordable health care for all people in the United States and its territories since 2003.

*Affordable* health care remains an elusive policy goal, despite all that Maryland and a clutch of its state colleagues have done to advance access. Medical debt is common enough in the public context that it is still a leading cause of bankruptcy. Our view is that this creates one more barrier to access, which is our community's interest.

**House Bill 1324** prohibits the sale of medical debt by medical facilities to all enterprises excepting not-for-profits with the public role of getting it canceled. Being ill should not be a cause for harassment, threat, and further down that legal corridor, homelessness and permit precarity.

We regard this bill as necessary for a humane justice and urge your favorable report.

Lee Hudson