

Testimony in Support of HB417:
Public Health - Commission on Universal Health Care
Position: Favorable

February 6 2025

Dear Honorable Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

I live in Prince George's County and I strongly support HB417. This bill will establish a Commission on Universal Healthcare to develop a plan for a state single-payer health care system to provide health care for all Maryland residents. As you know, there is no cost to create this commission.

Our current for-profit health care system is broken. People with "good" insurance are not always able to get the care they need. Many people who have health insurance can't afford to use it.

I have seen friends and neighbors experience stress due to confusing paperwork; denials of needed treatments; losing a provider when the insurance plan changed; unaffordable premiums and co-pays. It's even gotten to the point where folks put off needed care and medications because they can't pay for it.

Why is that, even though healthcare in our country is much more expensive than other countries, we have worse health outcomes? We need a system that provides healthcare, not health insurance. We need a single-payer, government run, not for profit system, which would decrease costs and improve health outcomes.

Today I urge a favorable report, with no weakening amendments, on HB417.

Thank you for your consideration.

John Spillane
Hyattsville, MD