

February 20, 2025

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk  
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee  
241 Taylor House Office Building  
6 Bladen St.  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: Letter of Information - HB 859 - Access to Health Insurance for Child Care Professionals - Outreach and Qualifying Nonprofit Satellite Organizations**

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee,

The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE) respectfully submits this letter of information for House Bill (HB) 859 - Access to Health Insurance for Child Care Professionals - Outreach and Qualifying Nonprofit Satellite Organizations. HB 859 would require the State Department of Education, in collaboration with MHBE, to promote access to health coverage for childcare professionals through targeted outreach and enrollment support. MHBE is supportive of initiatives that seek to increase access to health coverage in Maryland, and our staff have the capacity to consult with the Department of Education and share existing resources to assist in these efforts. We would advise that any expectations beyond this are not currently included or available under MHBE's existing budget.

MHBE is Maryland's state-designated health insurance marketplace, responsible for the administration of the marketplace enrollment platform Maryland Health Connection (MHC) where residents can shop for and enroll in health plans, compare rates, and determine eligibility for public assistance all in one place. Maryland has an integrated enrollment system with the state's Medicaid program, so in addition to private marketplace plans, MHC also processes and provides consumer support for the majority of Medicaid eligibility determinations and enrollments in the state.

MHBE currently provides extensive consumer support to assist individuals and families with determining program eligibility, health plan selection, and enrollment, including the:

- MHC Call Center, which provides consumer support 6 days a week in more than 200 languages
- Trained Navigators and MHC-authorized brokers, who provide free in-person and virtual assistance throughout the state to help consumers learn about, apply for and enroll in health coverage.

MHBE conducts robust marketing and outreach campaigns and has included child care professionals as a critical group to conduct targeted outreach for, including speaking at statewide child care conferences and messaging campaigns geared specifically towards child care



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providers. MHBE also has comprehensive consumer resources and fact sheets, all of which are readily available and can be shared with the Department of Education in these efforts.

For further discussions or questions on HB 859, please contact Johanna Fabian-Marks, Director of Policy and Plan Management at [johanna.fabian-marks@maryland.gov](mailto:johanna.fabian-marks@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michele Eberle".

Michele Eberle  
Executive Director