



TESTIMONY FOR HB0417

PUBLIC HEALTH – COMMISSION ON UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Ruth

Committee: Health and Government Operations

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0417 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our Coalition members throughout the state are highly supportive of universal health care. We applaud the steps that Maryland has already made towards a single payer goal with the establishment of a unique all-payer system for hospital reimbursement. We just need to push further to get the first-ever universal health care system in the United States.

Data from all around the world shows that a universal health care system is cheaper than what we have, and would provide better health outcomes. I have personal experience with other country's universal care systems. I have been treated by doctors in Canada, France, Switzerland and Italy. All the experiences I have had were very positive and my treatment cost nothing, except for the price of any prescriptions that I needed.

We can do this. We just need a plan and we need to understand how to get from the unbelievable disaster that we call health insurance in this country to universal coverage.

This legislation would get us the plan that we need to move forward. The bill sets up a Commission, made up of people with expertise in various aspects of health care. They will have until October 1, 2028 to provide a final report with a plan to the General Assembly. There are interim reporting steps each year to determine how far along they are, but within three years, we would have a plan that would make universal health care possible.

So many in Maryland don't even have insurance. Those that do pay dearly for the privilege. It is worth the cost of a study to see if we can make health care affordable for everyone in Maryland.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.