



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair
Delegate Bonnie Cullison, Vice Chair
Health and Government Operations Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus

DATE: February 26, 2025

RE: HB666 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance – Required Coverage for Calcium Score Testing

The MLLC supports HB666 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance – Required Coverage for Calcium Score Testing

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB666.

Data from the Maryland Department of Health indicates that heart disease is the second leading cause of death among Hispanics in the state, with mortality rates increasing by 5.2% between 2001 and 2010.¹ Barriers such as limited access to healthcare, language differences, and lack of insurance exacerbate these health disparities. In Maryland, the proportion of adults unable to afford healthcare was 2.9 times higher for Latinos than for their White counterparts between 2004 and 2008.²

HB666 mandates that the Maryland Medical Assistance Program along with insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations, provide coverage for calcium score testing for individuals with specific risk factors. These risk factors include diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and a family history of premature coronary artery disease. The bill amends the Health-General and Insurance Articles to require this coverage and ensures that managed care organizations follow the same provisions. By mandating coverage for calcium score testing, HB666 aims to facilitate early detection and prevention of heart disease among high-risk individuals.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB666.

¹ **Maryland Department of Health.** *Maryland Hispanic Health Disparity Data.* Maryland Department of Health, www.health.maryland.gov/mhhd/Documents/Maryland-Hispanic-Health-Disparity-Data.pdf.

² **Maryland Department of Health.** *Chartbook of Minority Health and Minority Health Disparities Data, Second Edition.* Maryland Department of Health, 2010, www.health.maryland.gov/mhhd/Documents/Chartbook_2nd_Ed_Final_2010_04_28.pdf.