

**Baptist Ministers' Night Conference of  
Baltimore and Vicinity (BMNCBV)**  
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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 987  
BEFORE THE SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE  
BY REV. DR. SANDRA CONNER, PRESIDENT, BMNCBV  
MARCH 11, 2025**

Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit supportive testimony for SB 987, and special thank you to Senator Karen Lewis Young for sponsoring this legislation. The Baptist Ministers' Night Conference of Baltimore and Vicinity is an organization that strives to equip both community and faith leaders with resources to do effective health ministries for the members they serve. Our affiliations, including membership are greater than 200 organizations, consisting of faith and community-based organizations, healthcare providers, civic and government entities, businesses, etc., [this number does not include individual organization membership (constituent) totals].

As faith leaders and laypersons, we know from our congregants how important it is for Medicaid to provide quality health care for the most vulnerable populations in Maryland. SB 987 would invest \$5 million each year into Medicaid eligibility operations to help ensure that Marylanders do not lose their Medicaid coverage as they navigate new HR 1 work reporting requirements and six-month redeterminations starting in 2027.

With rising health insurance costs, we also know how important it is for residents of Maryland to be able to receive premium assistance to purchase private health coverage if they are not able to enroll in Medicaid, Medicare, or employer-sponsored coverage. SB 987 would support state premium assistance programs which is especially important now that the federal government has terminated enhanced advance premium tax credits.

The U.S. is one of only two countries that allows direct-to-consumer prescription drug advertising and pharmaceutical corporations spend much more on advertising than they do on research and development. SB 987 would put patient health over pharmaceutical corporation profits. Maryland must do everything possible to protect our vulnerable residents. We pray that our legislators will heed our call and give a favorable report for SB 987.