

Testimony in Favor of Senate Bill 987
Before the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

By Mukta Bain

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Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in favor of SB 987.

Years ago Medicaid covered my health insurance, and I had no worries about paying for medications, visits to my primary care provider, and my therapy sessions every two weeks. When I got a job as contact tracer II, the Baltimore County Department of Health did not provide me with health insurance and so I was grateful to be able to remain on my Medicaid coverage.

Under HR 1 there will be new work requirements and six-month redeterminations for adults who receive Medicaid through the Affordable Care Act expansion. If these new requirements had been in place when I was enrolled in Medicaid, submitting extra paperwork to track my work hours would have created extra stress during an already difficult time. I wonder if I would have been able to navigate the red tape to keep my coverage even though I was already working.

My experience shows how important it is to put systems in place to ensure that people do not fall through the cracks and lose their health coverage under HR 1. SB 987 would invest \$5 million every year in Maryland's Medicaid eligibility operations to reduce the administrative burden on patients to meet the new requirements. Maryland must do everything in its power to ensure that Medicaid continues to provide health coverage to its most vulnerable residents.

Thank you very much for your leadership. I urge a favorable report on SB 987 which will help make the new HR 1 requirements as easy for Medicaid enrollees to navigate as possible.