

LARRY HOGAN
Governor

BOYD K. RUTHERFORD
Lt. Governor



Maryland

INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION

KATHLEEN A. BIRRANE
Commissioner

JAY COON
Deputy Commissioner

200 St. Paul Place, Suite 2700, Baltimore, Maryland 21202
Direct Dial: 410-468-2408 Fax: 410-468-2020
Email: Michael.paddy@maryland.gov
www.insurance.maryland.gov

**TESTIMONY OF
THE
MARYLAND INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION
BEFORE THE
SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

FEBRUARY 24, 2021

SENATE BILL 621 – ASSOCIATION HEALTH COVERAGE PLANS

POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide informational comments regarding Senate Bill 621. Senate Bill 621 eliminates the Insurance Commissioner's (Commissioner) authority to regulate out-of-state Association plans that issue certificates to Maryland residents. By eliminating these provisions, the bill will allow Maryland small employers and residents to purchase multiple employer welfare arrangement plans (MEWA) that are issued out of state, on a large group basis, without providing the benefits mandated by the General Assembly in the small group market. Similarly, the premium rates for such plans will not be reviewed for adequacy¹ by the Commissioner.

Additionally, this bill would allow chambers of commerce and their member company employees to join together to obtain a large group health insurance rate resulting in the migration of a significant percentage of employers from the small group market to a large group association plan. Because the small employer groups with less healthy employees will have a harder time moving to an experience rated, large group association plan, the Maryland marketplace will have a smaller pool of small group plans that are community rated. Such adverse selection in the small group market could cause small group plan rates to increase.

While the MIA does not have a policy position on Senate Bill 621, the MIA urges the committee's thorough exploration of these issues in consideration of Senate Bill 621.

¹ Section § 11-603 (c) requires that the Commissioner review rates to ensure that they are not excessive, inadequate, or unfairly discriminatory.