



**TESTIMONY FOR HB00694
HOSPITALS – FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – MEDICAL BILL REIMBURSEMENT**

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Charkoudian

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0694 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state. We have over 30,000 members across the state.

Getting a bill from a hospital is a shocking thing, given the costs involved. If you are a low- income resident and qualify for free care, the shock is even greater. These kinds of costs could force you to go bankrupt. Additionally, once you receive a bill like this getting it resolved is not and takes a lot of time.

This bill requires that hospitals notify patients who may have qualified for free care but received a bill for services, and provide refunds to any patients who were erroneously charged. The Health Services Cost Review Commission, which oversees the hospitals, may not raise hospital rates to offset the hospitals' refunds to patients.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition thinks this is an important bill. We support the bill and we recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.