



Maryland  
Hospital Association

February 22, 2024

To: The Honorable Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Chair, House Health & Government Operations Committee

Re: Letter of Support- House Bill 953 - Maryland Health Benefit Exchange – State-Based Young Adult Health Insurance Subsidies Pilot Program – Amount of Annual Subsidies

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 953.

Broad-based, affordable, and comprehensive health insurance is integral to hospitals' ability to provide high-quality care. It also is key to the state's success under the Total Cost of Care Model, which pushes accountability for whole-person care, including population health. Maryland hospitals have been strong proponents of the state's efforts to expand health care coverage, supporting Medicaid expansion, offering subsidized individual and small group health plans through the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE), the reinsurance subsidy, and the Young Adult Subsidy at issue.

Nearly 400,000 Marylanders remain uninsured, and even more are underinsured—which often prevents access to care and results in worse health outcomes. Moreover, the percentage of uninsured rises dramatically when looking at communities with historical health inequities. Under the Young Adult Subsidy Program, enrollments for young adults through July 2023 surpassed 51,000. As MHBE expanded subsidy eligibility to young adults up to age 37 for plan year 2024, HB 953 is a commonsense solution to boost the program's sustainability.<sup>1</sup>

Maryland hospitals support this bill's efforts to continue offering affordable coverage to more Marylanders. We look forward to our continued partnership with the state and the legislature to create sustainable solutions for access to affordable, comprehensive health insurance coverage.

For these reasons we respectfully request a *favorable* report on HB 953.

For more information, please contact:  
Jake Whitaker, Director, Government Affairs  
Jwhitaker@mhaonline.org

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<sup>1</sup> Maryland Health Benefit Exchange. "Annual Report 2023." <https://www.marylandhbe.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/MHC2023-AnnualReport.pdf> (accessed February 20, 2024).