

Council Bill No. 55-2020

Medicare for All on a Local Level

I support CB55-2020. This act will require the County Executive to submit fiscal analyses for specified legislative items; specifying when a fiscal analysis must be submitted; and generally relating to the enactment of legislation.

I am a change advocate who supports single-payer healthcare. I want to form a working group of healthcare executives from private healthcare companies and hospitals, doctors, patient advocates, business leaders, government officials, public policy analysts, and change advocates like myself. The idea is to get single-payer healthcare for Baltimore City, Montgomery, and Howard County. I have reached out to the RAND corporation to see if they could analyze how much more in raised taxes it would cost to have single-payer healthcare in the above-mentioned localities. They seemed open to the idea. My idea would still include private health insurance as I suspect, the local government would probably outsource the work of healthcare management. Additionally, I do not want to eliminate Tricare, Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP, or any federally funded program. Nor am I looking for federal subsidies. This should minimize some of the barriers associated with federal laws and waivers. We would still need permission from the state.

I am requesting for Howard County Council to be a part of this working group or to refer me to anyone who may be interested in joining this effort. My goal is to build a strong working group/coalition of interested parties.

A requirement to mandate the County Executive to submit fiscal analyses for specified legislative item will complement my efforts to form a working group on the issue of single payer healthcare. A fiscal analysis of the proposed working group will weigh the pros and cons of studying Medicare for All more in depth and may provide a pathway for implementing it on a local level. Additionally, my reasons for supporting CB-55 2020 can be summarized into one sentence: **We need to build our communities.**

Today more than 30 million American do not have health insurance and many more are underinsured. Having insurance is not a total safety net from unexpectant medical bills. For many individuals their medical bills cause bankruptcy. Single-payer healthcare will eliminate this problem. Furthermore, families that do not receive healthcare become broken often resulting in not being able to contribute to the workforce. Broken families in turn become broken communities. This is not what we want for Howard County and its surrounding municipalities. I believe a fiscal analysis of this proposed study will help to demonstrate to the public the need to build communities by ensuring that everyone has access to healthcare.

Providing Medicare for All will allow for drug treatment. According to Family Advocates Coalition to End Addiction in Maryland (F.A.C.E), more than 40,000 arrests for non-

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violent drug crimes took place in Maryland in 2014, and 81% of drug arrests were for possession only. Furthermore, Maryland has approximately 4,000 prisoners incarcerated for drug crimes at any point in time, costing the corrections system \$260 million. If we provide drug treatment, less people will be going to jail and less money will be spent on building penitentiaries. We can build community by providing drug treatment and harm reduction measures that will enable people to be productive members of society. Medicare for All provides presents the opportunity to provide treatment will help those who may have been surrounded by negative influencers during their developmental years. These individuals will be role models for the sons and daughters they raise to build not just our local community but for a nation.

Again, I request support for a working group to study Medicare for All on a local level. CB-55 2020 complements these efforts. Please contact me for more information.

Very Respectfully,

Veronica Wright