



# Howard County Council

George Howard Building  
3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

## COUNCILMEMBERS

**Deb Jung, Chairperson**

District 4

**Liz Walsh, Vice Chairperson**

District 1

**Opel Jones**

District 2

**Christiana Rigby**

District 3

September 24, 2020

The Honorable Ben Cardin  
United States Senate  
509 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senate  
110 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kweisi Mfume  
United States House of Representatives  
2163 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Dutch Ruppersberger  
United States House of Representatives  
2206 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Sarbanes  
United States House of Representatives  
2370 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Cardin, Senator Van Hollen, Congressman Mfume, Congressman Ruppersberger, and Congressman Sarbanes:

Thank you for your leadership on behalf of Marylanders across our state to advocate for a full federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We deeply appreciate your efforts to advocate for federal relief funding for local governments throughout this ongoing public health crisis. We also appreciate your dedication to preserving the Affordable Care Act and expanding healthcare access during this pandemic, which is essential to a protecting the health of Howard County residents.

As the COVID-19 public health crisis continues to spread rapidly throughout the state and country, the undersigned members of the Howard County Council are writing today to respectfully request your support for HR-1384 and S-1129, the Medicare for All Act of 2019. This legislation would guarantee that every person living in the United States receive access to healthcare through a universal expansion of the existing Medicare program.

As unemployment claims continue to rise, Marylanders from every corner of the state are experiencing loss of their employer-based health insurance during a global pandemic. At the same time, Marylanders who were uninsured before the COVID-19 pandemic are feeling both a greater economic strain and the urgent need to provide critical care for their families. The COVID-19 crisis has illustrated how a major job-loss event could easily result in the loss of health insurance for millions of people, highlighting the vulnerability of our current employer-based healthcare system.

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This pandemic has reinforced the essential truth that access to healthcare should be a right for all residents of the United States. The Medicare for All Act would ensure that every person in the United States receives health insurance, regardless of their employment status, race, income, or personal health background.

Additionally, a Medicare for All healthcare plan would save taxpayers, businesses, and local governments millions of dollars each year in rising healthcare expenses. In our county alone, Howard County Government spends roughly \$65 million on employee healthcare expenses annually. A Medicare for All system would reduce county spending on healthcare and enable local governments across our state to invest additional dollars into education, environmental protection, housing assistance, and other critical services.

A growing coalition has recognized the urgent need to expand healthcare to every resident of the United States, and we add our names to this effort. The below-signed members of the Howard County Council fully support the Medicare for All Act of 2019, and we respectfully encourage your support for this critical legislation. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Liz Walsh  
Councilmember, District 1



Opel Jones  
Councilmember, District 2



Christiana Rigby  
Councilmember, District 3



Deb Jung  
Councilmember, District 4

cc: Howard County Council  
Howard County Executive