January \_, 2017

The Honorable Larry Hogan

100 State Circle

Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: Impact to Marylanders of Repeal of Medicaid Expansion**

Dear Governor Hogan:

I implore you to immediately contact President Donald Trump, Department of Health and Human Services Appointee Representative Tom Price (R-GA), Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), Senate Finance Committee Chair Orrin G. Hatch (R-UT), Senate Budget Committee Chair Mike Enzi (R-WY), House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI), House Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Greg Walden (R-OR) and House Budget Committee Chair Diane Black (R-TN) and ask them you oppose any attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act’s (ACA) Medicaid eligibility expansion or turn Medicaid into a block grant. Marylanders have too much at stake, and as the elected leader of this State you cannot remain silent on this issue any longer! The impact of this loss would touch every segment of life in Maryland.

Marylanders’ lives are at risk if Medicaid expansion funding is cut. Nearly 291,000 Maryland residents now have coverage under the Medicaid expansion.  These low-income residents would likely lose coverage if expanded eligibility was eliminated. Without coverage, these individuals will ultimately end up seeking care in hospital emergency rooms after a treatable medical condition has significantly deteriorated. This trend of excess hospitalizations could place the State’s all-payer waiver at risk. Further, without expanded Medicaid coverage, those with medical conditions may find themselves unable to work and provide for their families.

For those 11,000 individuals within the expanded Medicaid eligibility population experiencing symptoms of mental illness or substance use disorder, loss of eligibility means they may no longer have access to care so critical to their daily lives. This is particularly important for the State’s efforts to combat opioid abuse. According to the Lieutenant Governor’s Heroin & Opioid Emergency Task Force, there is an “overall rise in the number of drug- and alcohol-related deaths . . . largely attributable to increases in the number of heroin and fentanyl-related deaths.” Without access to coverage, where will these individuals get the treatment they need?

As to children and the disabled who were receiving Medicaid through the ACA’s new streamlined eligibility process, loss of expanded Medicaid eligibility means they are now more vulnerable than ever.

If the stories of these vulnerable populations are not compelling enough, the impact on the State budget will be devastating. It is estimated that Maryland would lose $1.9 billion in federal Medicaid funding in 2019 and $23.4 billion between 2019 and 2028. These numbers are probably low when you consider that those who lose coverage will probably wait longer to get the care they need instead of seeking less expensive preventive care. These reductions in spending will not be able to be paid for by providers. They will be too busy absorbing the cost of uncompensated care. Other sources of revenue will have to be found.

Is this the budget deficit you intend to start your second term with or leave to your successor? Put Marylanders first and contact the President and members of Congress listed above and tell them no cuts to the ACA’s expansion to Medicaid.