

**STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**



MARTIN O'MALLEY
GOVERNOR

STATE HOUSE
100 STATE CIRCLE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1925
(410) 974-3901
(TOLL FREE) 1-800-811-8336

TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

Lee Diemer
President, Baltimore Association of Health Underwriters
501 Fairmount Avenue
Towson, MD 21286

Dear Mr. Diemer:

For thousands of working Marylanders, affordable health care has been out of reach far too long. It is a crisis seen across the country and is especially pronounced in small businesses. Escalating health costs can suppress wages, reduce hiring, stall research and development efforts, and drive fledgling businesses into bankruptcy. Maryland can and will do better. Since taking office, our Administration has taken notable steps to increase access to affordable health care coverage, improve the quality of care and bring health care costs under control for employers and employees.

The hallmark of these reforms, the Working Families and Small Business Health Coverage Act will, when fully implemented, extend medical coverage to more than 100,000 uninsured Marylanders – including low income adults and children. The Act expands Medicaid to parents with incomes below \$20,000 for a family of three – or 116% of the federal poverty level. Understanding that small businesses are the engine of Maryland's economy, the Act also helps small businesses provide health insurance to their employees through the creation of the Health Insurance Partnership.

I am writing to thank both the leadership and the brokers and agents of the Baltimore Association of Health Underwriters for their instrumental role in our outreach efforts to enroll the owners and employees of small businesses in the Health Insurance Partnership. I know that you have contributed time, energy, and association funds to help promote the Program. Please share my appreciation with the brokers and agents of your organization who are working hard to inform and enroll eligible small businesses.

This public-private partnership between small businesses and the State will make a real difference in the lives of many working Marylanders by reducing the cost of health insurance for thousands of Maryland families. By allowing people to buy into health coverage at a level they can afford, we're making sure more Marylanders receive the coverage they deserve.

Thank you again for your important contribution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Martin O'Malley".

Governor

