

May 26, 2005

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
President of the Senate
State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, today I have vetoed Senate Bill 716 – *Community Health Care Access and Safety Net Act of 2005*.

This bill alters the eligibility requirements of the Maryland Pharmacy Discount Program to cover individuals who are not Medicare beneficiaries, who lack other public or private prescription drug coverage, who have a specified annual household income, and to exclude Medicare beneficiaries. Moreover, Senate Bill 716 establishes the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission as an independent commission that functions within the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and also establishes the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission Fund.

House Bill 627, which was passed by the General Assembly and signed by me, accomplishes the same purpose. Therefore, it is not necessary for me to sign Senate Bill 716.

Very truly yours,
Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor

Senate Bill No. 716

AN ACT concerning

Community Health Care Access and Safety Net Act of 2005

FOR the purpose of altering the eligibility requirements of the Maryland Pharmacy Discount Program to cover individuals who are not Medicare beneficiaries, who lack other public or private prescription drug coverage, who have a certain annual household income, and to exclude Medicare beneficiaries; altering the price at which an enrollee in the Program may purchase certain prescription drugs; requiring hospitals to develop financial assistance policies to provide free and reduced-cost care to certain patients; requiring hospitals to post a certain notice; requiring the Health Services Cost Review Commission to develop a uniform financial assistance application and require each hospital to use the application for a certain purpose; requiring a hospital to provide the uniform financial assistance application to certain patients; requiring hospitals to submit to the Health Services Cost Review Commission certain debt collection policies; requiring the Health Services Cost Review Commission to report to certain committees of the General Assembly on or before a certain date on the details of certain hospital policies; requiring nonprofit hospitals to include certain information in their community benefit reports to the Health Services Cost Review Commission; establishing the Maryland Community Health