

WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER, Governor

Preamble

WHEREAS, During the 1988 Interim a Special Joint Legislative Committee on the Medical Assistance Program was established to undertake a comprehensive review of Maryland's Medical Assistance Program; and

~~WHEREAS, The Special Joint Legislative Committee found that there is currently no well-defined public policy for Maryland's Medical Assistance Program; and~~

~~WHEREAS, The Program's eligibility and service limits have been established administratively and on a piecemeal basis through the budget process and by regulations; and~~

~~WHEREAS, The Program lacks cohesiveness and a sense of overall direction; and~~

WHEREAS, The effects of changes made to the Program are seldom measured against initial projections; and

WHEREAS, While the The Program provides a wide array of services, those services are afforded to only a relatively limited segment of the indigent population; and

WHEREAS, While State expenditures for the Program have almost doubled between F.Y. 1982 and F.Y. 1989, but Program enrollment has declined; and

WHEREAS, The Program provides relatively good reimbursement for institutional services such as hospitals and comprehensive care facilities, but relatively poor reimbursement for noninstitutional services such as physician visits; and

WHEREAS, Program reimbursement practices provide little incentive There is a need to provide better Program reimbursement procedures for less expensive and preventive care; and

WHEREAS, Program recipients have good access to hospital and nursing home care but may have difficulty finding a physician to provide primary health care; and

WHEREAS, Access to and continuity of care for Program recipients are hampered by shortages of primary care providers in areas where Program recipients reside, a lack of consumer education about good health habits, limits on coverage of certain types of providers and on services for people with particular disabilities, and a lack of coordination among the State agencies and private providers involved in the Program; and