

Preamble

WHEREAS, The number of uninsured individuals is growing both nationally and in Maryland and the care provided to the uninsured is often delivered episodically in high cost settings; and

WHEREAS, There are 39.4 million adults, constituting 17.3% of the U.S. population, and 712,000 adults, constituting 17.2% of Maryland's population, who are uninsured; and

WHEREAS, There are 9.6 million children, constituting 14% of the U.S. population, and 137,000 children, constituting 12.5% of Maryland's population, who are uninsured; and

WHEREAS, Nationally, 85% of uninsured individuals live in families headed by workers; and

WHEREAS, Nationally, 57% of uninsured individuals work full time and 23% work part time; and

WHEREAS, Employer-sponsored health plans are the primary source of coverage and, nationally, employer-sponsored coverage is dropping: from 77.7% in 1990 to 73.9% in 1995 to a projected 70.4% in 2002; and

WHEREAS, There are a number of pilot programs and targeted initiatives in communities throughout the State providing health care services to those without health insurance, but there is no coordinated effort at the State level to address the needs of uninsured individuals; and

WHEREAS, The establishment under this Act of the Maryland Health Care Foundation is intended to promote public awareness of the need to provide more timely and cost-effective care for uninsured Marylanders and to receive moneys that can be used to provide financial support to programs that expand access to health care services for uninsured Marylanders; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article - Health - General**

**SUBTITLE 5. MARYLAND HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION.**

20-501.

(A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(B) "FOUNDATION" MEANS THE MARYLAND HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION.

(C) (1) "HEALTH CARE PROVIDER" MEANS:

(I) A PERSON WHO IS LICENSED, CERTIFIED, OR OTHERWISE AUTHORIZED UNDER THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE TO PROVIDE HEALTH