

federal poverty level but does not exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty level, and the use of family contribution amounts in sufficient time to meet the July 1, 1999 implementation date for employer sponsored health benefit plans, individual health benefit plans, and family contribution amount requirements.]

SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That authorization is granted to the Governor to transfer by contract, grant, or otherwise, \$500,000 to the Foundation in the 1998 fiscal year or 1999 fiscal year budgets to cover the expenses associated with the operation of the Foundation.

SECTION 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shall seek a written determination or decision from the federal Health Care Financing Administration as to whether the State can employ a refundable tax credit in the Children and Families Health Care Program established under § 15-301 of the Health - General Article. On or before December 1, 1998, the Department shall report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, on the following:

(1) the federal Health Care Financing Administration's written determination or decision as to whether the State can employ a refundable tax credit in the Children and Families Health Care Program; and

(2) if the federal Health Care Financing Administration approves a refundable tax credit, the feasibility of and methods for employing a refundable tax credit in the Children and Families Health Care Program.

SECTION 7. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shall seek a written determination or decision from the federal Health Care Financing Administration as to whether the State can extend the use of employer sponsored health benefit plans or individual health benefit plans on a voluntary basis to individuals who have a family income at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level. On or before December 1, 1998, the Department shall report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, on the following:

(1) the federal Health Care Financing Administration's written determination or decision as to whether the State can extend the use of an employer sponsored health benefit plan or an individual health benefit plan on a voluntary basis to individuals with a family income at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level; and

(2) if the federal Health Care Financing Administration approves extending the use of an employer sponsored health benefit plan or an individual health benefit plan to individuals with a family income at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level, the feasibility of and methods for implementing the use of employer sponsored health benefit plans or individuals health benefit plans on a voluntary basis to individuals with a family income at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level.

SECTION 8. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before December 1, 1998, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shall study and report to the