



PRESS RELEASE

Coalition of Attorneys General Sends Letter Urging Trump Administration to Open Special Enrollment Periods on Healthcare.gov to Help Millions of Consumers with COVID-19 Costs

BALTIMORE, MD (April 3, 2020) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today joined a coalition of 21 attorneys general in sending a [letter](#) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and its Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), urging them to reconsider their decision to deny a special enrollment period on [HealthCare.Gov](#) during the current worldwide pandemic. In the letter, the attorneys general argue that the federal government should take action to make it possible for Americans across the country – who are facing uncertainty as a result of COVID-19 – to obtain the healthcare coverage they need during this critical time.

“Here in Maryland, enrollment in our health insurance exchange has been extended until June 15th, allowing many more Marylanders to obtain critical health coverage,” said Attorney General Frosh. “In the midst of an unprecedented health crisis, it is the duty of government to protect its citizens and ensure they have access to the resources to protect their health and the health of their family members.”

In the letter, the attorneys general point out that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of individuals have lost their jobs—and with their jobs, their ability to pay for healthcare. Many people may be prevented from obtaining treatment because they lack healthcare coverage, or face financial ruin if they seek care. People working on the front lines in grocery stores, food service, transportation, and sanitation are suffering the brunt of the pandemic as they often lack health insurance and work jobs that do not provide sick leave. Because they are uninsured, they are less likely to have a regular place to obtain healthcare and are more likely to delay obtaining care due to fears of the cost. The Trump Administration has long touted choice and “informed healthcare decisions” as the bedrock of its healthcare policies, but now refuses to give Americans the option of obtaining comprehensive healthcare coverage to combat this unprecedented healthcare care crisis.

The attorneys general also highlight that a national solution to this problem requires federal action. While some states run their own health insurance exchanges and may independently extend enrollment - [Maryland Health Connection](#) has extended enrollment until June 15, 2020 - 38 states, rely on [HealthCare.Gov](#) to run their exchanges. The federal government has the legal

ability to call for a special enrollment period, and must take decisive action so that people in those 38 states can obtain the healthcare they need during this critical time.

In sending the letter, Attorney General Frosh joins the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia.