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Press Release

Starting May 1, City Residents Can Pre-Enroll for July 1 Health Insurance Expansion

Baltimore, Maryland—April 30, 2008: Baltimore HealthCare Access is pleased to announce it will begin pre enrolling Baltimore City residents into the expanded Medicaid expansion program on Thursday, May 1.

The Medicaid expansion program is the result of the Working Families and Small Business Health Care Coverage Act of 2007 passed during the 2007 General Assembly's special session and is slated to begin July 1, 2008.

The new program expands access to health coverage to parents of children enrolled in Medicaid and the Maryland Children's Health Insurance Program whose income is at or below 116% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$20,000 for a family of three). BHCA will pre screen clients for eligibility for the new program and place them first in line to obtain eligibility on July 1. Baltimore City residents can attend an enrollment event this week or call 410-649-0500 for pre-enrollment.

"This is the best way for thousands of eligible parents in the city to get health coverage as soon as possible. We are really thrilled the Working Families and Small Business Health Care Coverage Act of 2007 passed during the special session and are excited to begin finding parents in Baltimore who will be eligible for the new program," said Kathleen Westcoat, President of Baltimore HealthCare Access, Inc.

"I urge everyone without health insurance to call for assistance," said Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, Commissioner of Health. "Those who don't qualify for the new program can learn about other resources too."

Pre-Enrollment events coincide with *Cover the Uninsured Week* from April 27-May3. *Cover the Uninsured Week* is a national annual event started in 2003 to raise awareness of the plight of our nation's uninsured. In Maryland, the second wealthiest state in the union, there

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are more than 780,000 uninsured. Children comprise 124,000 of theMarylanders who go without the health care they need.

Baltimore HealthCare Access is joining with community organizations to host three pre-enrollment events in Baltimore City this week. Each event will educate community residents about available options for health care coverage and will feature knowledgeable BHCA staff and Project Health volunteers and will also assist with *onsite enrollment* into the Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP) and the *Primary Adult Care Program (PAC)*. Events will be held at the following locations:

Our Daily Bread
Wednesday, April 30th
725 Fallsway Road 21202
11:00am - 3:00pm

The Markets at Highlandtown
Friday, May 2nd
3801 Eastern Avenue, 21224
3:00pm-6:00pm

Tench Tilghman Elementary School with Project HEALTH
Saturday, My 3rd
600 North Patterson Park, 21205
2:00pm-4:00pm

For more information please contact Baltimore HealthCare Access' Communications Director, Therese McIntyre at 410-649-0521 ext 3007.

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Baltimore HealthCare Access Inc. is a quasi public agency of the Baltimore City Health Department and provides eligibility services for the Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP) and the Primary Adult Care (PAC) programs in Baltimore. BHCA also provides outreach to the community about health care coverage options and other available resources. For more information visit: www.bhca.org

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