

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

August 9, 2013

Mr. Robert Edwards
Program Analyst
Health Resources and Services Administration
Office of Shortage Designation
5600 Fishers Lane, 9A-55
Rockville, Maryland 20857

Dear Mr. Edwards:

I am writing in strong support of the applications for designations of a Medically Underserved Area/Population (MUA/P) submitted by the Primary Care Office of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for two areas of primary care shortage in Carroll County, Maryland.

One requested designation is for the Downtown Westminster area, which includes census tracts 507702, 507703, and 507704. The second requested designation is for the Middleburg Service Area, which includes the single census tract 510000. In addition to a shortage of primary care professionals, both recommended designation areas represent increased poverty and a large elderly population.

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to visit Access Carroll, Inc., a nonprofit organization that provides free health care (including primary, behavioral and dental care) to the most vulnerable members of our community. Sustained only by grants, donations, and volunteers, Access Carroll's capacity to meet the growing demand for primary care services, especially in these areas, is limited.

Obtaining MUA/P designations is an important step in improving access to primary health care services for Carroll County residents. The designations would enable facilities in the county, including Access Carroll, to apply for both health center status and funding through other federal programs.

I strongly support the Maryland Primary Care Office's efforts to obtain MUA/P designation for the Downtown Westminster and Middleburg service areas and urge favorable consideration of this application.

Sincerely,



Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress

Copies sent to:

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