

Leadership That Works: Providing Affordable, Quality Health Care

Goals and Values for Providing Quality Affordable Health Care

Martin O'Malley and Anthony Brown believe access to health care should be a right – not a privilege. O'Malley and Brown share the goal of affordable health care for all Maryland families and understand that without federal leadership we cannot achieve these goals. That's why they have a forward-looking plan that will make significant strides to provide quality and affordable health care to all families at the state level. They believe that as long as senior citizens are forced to choose between medicine and rent; as long as families end up in the emergency room for routine illnesses because they have no other access to care; and as long as our neighbors are suffering due to a basic lack of care, we have a responsibility to do better. Maryland needs leadership that works for more affordable, quality health care for the hard-working families of Maryland, not special interests and big drug companies.

Paths to Progress

As Maryland's next Governor, Martin O'Malley will:

- **Create a Health Care Insurance Pool for Small Businesses.** Martin O'Malley will help small businesses – the number one source of insurance for Marylanders – make health insurance more widely available to their employees. O'Malley will use such means as tax credits and a statewide insurance purchasing pool in which small businesses can join together to negotiate lower rates in order to make health care insurance more affordable.
- **Expand Access to Health Care for Maryland Children Most In Need.** Martin O'Malley will ensure that more Maryland children have access to health care by working to maximize potential coverage through the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
- **Address Maryland's Nursing Shortage.** Martin O'Malley will address Maryland's nursing shortage and help improve quality by creating incentives to recruit and retain the best nurses.
- **Make Prescription Drugs More Affordable.** Martin O'Malley will make prescriptions more affordable and direct state agencies to help Medicare recipients navigate the confusing "Medicare Part D" plans.
- **Reform Medical Reporting to Reduce Medical Errors, Lower Costs and Save Lives.** Martin O'Malley will improve the quality of health care and hold down costs by reducing medical errors in the treatment of patients, improving training of medical providers and increasing the use of information technology.
- **Reduce Disparities in Minority Health Care.** Martin O'Malley will actively work to reduce disparities in minority health care, including increasing funding for community health centers and promoting programs that target conditions that disproportionately affect minority communities such as childhood asthma.
- **Increase Access to Care in Rural Communities.** Martin O'Malley will dedicate more state resources to increasing access to care for rural communities, including programs that place nurses and providers in underserved communities.

- **Restore Cuts to Assisted Living and Invest in Long Term Insurance.** Martin O'Malley will restore the funding cuts by the Ehrlich administration to assisted living programs and will ensure assisted living facilities in Maryland have adequate support.

A Record of Progress

- Martin O'Malley, in partnership with health care providers and seniors advocates, started the Baltimore Medicare Part D Surveillance and Response Initiative to support seniors and pharmacists in their transition to the new Medicare prescription drug program.
- Martin O'Malley launched the Baltimore ScriptSave prescription drug discount card, an innovative program that significantly lowered prescription drugs costs for Baltimore residents.
- Martin O'Malley reduced by 65% the number of children exposed to damaging high levels of lead. O'Malley's leadership has brought school age immunization compliance to 99.8% -- up from 60% in 1996 -- the best of any urban school district in the country.
- Martin O'Malley fought for passage of the *Fair Share Health Care Act*, even in the face of Governor Ehrlich's veto, to force the largest corporations to pay their fair share of employee health care costs rather than steering the burden to state taxpayers.
- Martin O'Malley expanded leave time for all full and part-time city employees to get cancer screenings.
- Martin O'Malley increased funding for community health centers that provide preventive health care for lower income families, the elderly, individuals with disabilities and children.
- Martin O'Malley tackled the problem of drug-addicted residents head-on and led the fight to double the funding available for drug treatment. As a result, Baltimore had the nation's second largest decline in drug-related emergency room visits.

Maryland Can Do Better

- Under Bob Ehrlich the number of people without insurance has increased to more than 800,000.
- The average cost of private insurance has skyrocketed under Bob Ehrlich's failed leadership. Instead of working to make health care more affordable, Ehrlich has done little or nothing.
- Bob Ehrlich left Maryland seniors behind, while other states provided much-needed assistance to their seniors participating in the new Medicare prescription drug plan.
- Bob Ehrlich opposed the *Fair Share Health Care Act* which makes our largest corporations pay their fair share of their employee's health care bills. Without this access to care, many employees were forced to turn to taxpayer-financed Medicaid rolls.
- Bob Ehrlich cut millions from much needed funding to assisted living programs and has failed to adequately regulate and inspect these important facilities.
- Bob Ehrlich cut funding for lead paint removal and forced the people of Baltimore to pick up the tab for this state-run program.

**Bob Ehrlich and Health Care – No Goals. Failed Leadership.
A Stronger Maryland Can Do Better.**

Martin O'Malley and Anthony Brown – Leadership That Works