

October 19, 2020

Dear Governor Hogan,

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has proven to be a challenge for many Marylanders who currently face financial hardship, food insecurity, and access to adequate physical and mental health care. As we adjust to this new reality, with businesses slowly reopening and school districts grappling with decisions on instruction models, we need to remain committed to ensuring the health and safety of those communities that continue to be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and its collateral consequences.

Long standing disparities have exacerbated the impact of COVID-19 in the Latino community with Latino infection rates higher than any other racial or ethnic group in Maryland relative to their statewide population. Many factors have left the Latino community at greater risk of exposure to the virus, including a high number of Latino workers represented in essential sectors, reliance on public transportation, the prevalence of intergenerational homes, and limited culturally-appropriate information on how to stay safe from the virus. While Latino frontline workers keep Maryland running, many have left themselves vulnerable to the novel coronavirus in the process. These brave Marylanders risk their health and the safety of their families to restock grocery shelves, deliver packages to our doors, provide healthcare to our loved ones, keep our buildings clean and safe, and ensure government services are delivered.

Immigrant workers – regardless of their status – pay millions in state and local taxes and have been integral to our collective health and safety during the pandemic. Maryland's undocumented immigrants are some of those who contribute millions annually. Immigrants who do not have a Social Security Number use an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) to file their taxes. According to a report from the Maryland Comptroller's office, in 2018, ITIN holders paid \$66,857,651 in income taxes to the state. In total, Maryland collected nearly \$139 million in state, local, and sales taxes from ITIN holders. This finding indicates there are a significant number of undocumented immigrants who help to support the state and who are greatly impacted by COVID-19, yet do not receive assistance.

We respectfully request that you increase the state's focus on preventing the spread of COVID-19 within Latino communities and provide additional financial relief for Latino families. We believe that the state must take the lead by funding programs that reach those who are disproportionately affected by the virus in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you to address this critical issue that is impacting our Latino communities.

Sincerely,