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Health care laws are topic of forum

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SALISBURY -- A pair of public interest groups will host a public forum tonight to consider the state's new health care laws.

The town hall-style meeting will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Community Foundation's Eastern Shore Nonprofit Resource Center to discuss the expansion of new health care legislation in Maryland.

The forums are part of a statewide effort to help craft comprehensive reform of health care access for likely introduction in the 2009 session of the Maryland General Assembly.

"We are looking forward to hearing from the people of the Lower Shore about what should be in the health-care-for-all plan that we will unveil later this year," said Vincent DeMarco, president of the Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative. "Our coalition of over 1,100 faith, community, health care, labor and business groups from across the state is looking forward to working with community leaders on the Shore to come up with a health care plan that makes sense for Maryland. This will build upon the Governor's Working Families and Small Business Health Care Coverage Act that was passed during last year's Special Session, which will guarantee health care coverage for over 100,000 uninsured Marylanders."

The meeting is one of a series of public forums throughout Maryland sponsored by two state organizations, the Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative and Progressive Maryland. The purpose of the forum is to allow the public to comment on what people would like to see in an overall plan to give access to quality, affordable health care for all Maryland residents.

"The question is what is the most efficient and reasonable way to do it," said Salisbury resident Mike Pretl of MCHI.

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