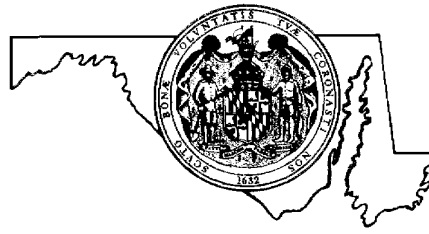


Craig P. Tanio, M.D.
CHAIR

STATE OF MARYLAND

Ben Steffen
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION

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OPPORTUNITY FOR MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESSES

Because open enrollment for small businesses in the SHOP exchange was deferred to January 1, 2014, VIRTUAL COMPARE will continue to operate as an information resource for small businesses interested in purchasing a Comprehensive Standard Health Benefit Plan for their employees until **December 31, 2013**, at which time VIRTUAL COMPARE will be **deactivated**. This delay allows small businesses that have not provided insurance in the previous 12 months an additional three-month window to purchase a Comprehensive Standard Health Benefit Plan, and possibly qualify for Maryland's Health Insurance Partnership premium subsidy program.