



Good afternoon, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on HB 14. My name is Bryan Lowe, I am the Regional Director of State and Local Government Relations for Walgreens.

Walgreens is supportive of HB 14, which would change state law to allow pharmacists to use an expiration date on prescription labels to be equal to the manufacturer's expiration date. Many prescription medications are dispensed in the original manufacturer packaging, such as inhalers, oral contraceptives, high-dollar specialty medications, and these medications have expiration dates printed on the package from the manufacturer. Existing state law requires pharmacists to print on the label that the medication expires no more than 1 year from the date of dispensing; even though, the manufacturer's expiration date on the package can be 1 or more years after the required 1 year expiration date. This can lead to patients throwing out and replacing medication prior to the expiration date of the manufacturer. The benefit to patients is that they do not have to replace costly medications, prior to the expiration date set by the manufacturer. Is it right to ask patients to discard prescription medications that still have shelf life past the state required one-year expiration date?

Walgreens received a number of consumer complaints in the early to mid-2000's regarding prescription labels with expiration dates conflicting with the expiration date listed on the manufacturer's original packaging. At that time, Walgreens changed its policy to use the manufacturer's expiration date on prescriptions dispensed in the manufacturer's original packaging. Although this change went into effect over 15 years ago, Walgreens had not been cited for any violations, until 2018. Since 2018, the Maryland Board of Pharmacy has cited Walgreens over 50 times.

Walgreens is requesting your support of HB 14 to help limit healthcare costs by allowing pharmacists to utilize the manufacturer's expiration date – which will help limit patients from discarding viable product and unnecessarily refilling medications.