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Finance Committee

Joint Committees

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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Joanne C. Benson  
SB 661: Reimbursement of Pharmacist for Services Rendered

Good Afternoon Chair Kelly, Vice-Chair Feldman, and members of the Finance Committee. I am here to present SB0661 Reimbursement of Pharmacist for Services Rendered. This bill is for the financial well-being of pharmacist in the state of Maryland.

This bill is critical in providing pharmacists with financial reimbursement for medical services that would otherwise not happen without this legislation. Maryland pharmacists have committed themselves to practices, services, informational packet production and administration of services that have advanced the health of Maryland citizens.

Nonetheless, for some practices and administration of services that are suitable under the current pharmacist extent of training in Maryland and for which insurance companies would repay other medical care suppliers, pharmacists are right now not compensated by insurance. Pharmacists are one of the most available medical services suppliers for Maryland patients, with most Maryland inhabitants living within five miles of a pharmacy.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, pharmacists have been vital to providing services for the general well-being of Marylanders. Including, yet not restricted to, directing the administration of vaccinations, overseeing COVID-19 treatments, telehealth, and COVID-19 testing. Regardless of the significant job pharmacists play in the medical care framework, Maryland comes up short on the component to appropriately repay them for large numbers of the essential services they give to patients.

This bill's purpose is to change the definition of "Healthcare supplier" to include pharmacists. The definition change will allow specific guarantors, philanthropic administration plans, and insurance companies to give repayment to specific medical services given by a pharmacist at a similar rate as similar services provided by a physician and physician assistant.

This bill will assist with guaranteeing pharmacists are repaid for services they render to patients. The absence of repayment is perhaps the biggest obstacle to additional extension of clinical help contributions in pharmacies and clinics. Inability to repay pharmacists similarly to other progressed practice suppliers will fuel medical care supplier deficiencies and disproportionately sway patients who are already underserved.

Thus, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report for SB0661.