



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

January 24, 2024

The Honorable Senator Pamela Beidle
Chair, Finance Committee
3 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 235 – Prescription Drug Monitoring Program – Dispensers - Veterinarians – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of support for SB 235 – Prescription Drug Monitoring Program – Dispensers - Veterinarians.

The Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) was established under law in order to assist prescribers, pharmacists, and public health professionals in the identification and prevention of prescription drug abuse and the identification and investigation of unlawful prescription drug diversion. The PDMP carries out this mission by monitoring the prescribing and dispensing of all Schedule II-V controlled dangerous substances. The PDMP is currently unable to carry out this mission as a critical source of controlled dangerous substance prescription information is missing from the PDMP. To help address the opioid epidemic, SB 235 addresses a reporting gap of controlled dangerous substances dispensed by veterinarians in Maryland.

The PDMP requires Maryland pharmacies and dispensing practitioners to report data on controlled dangerous substances that are dispensed to patients. The Program partners with the Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP) to allow access to prescription monitoring data for certain enumerated purposes, to include: supporting medical care, supporting existing bona fide individual investigations, and facilitating public health surveillance and research. The PDMP monitors the controlled dangerous substances dispensed in Maryland and serves as a tool for clinical care coordination to reduce drug-related overdoses due to opioids and other controlled substances.

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SB 235 proposes to add a requirement for veterinarians who dispense controlled dangerous substances to report prescription information to the PDMP in alignment with every other dispenser of controlled dangerous substances in the state. Currently, pharmacies and Maryland physicians, dentists, podiatrists, nurse midwives, and nurse practitioners are required to report prescription monitoring data for the controlled dangerous substances they dispense. The bill will require veterinarians who dispense controlled dangerous substances from their office or clinic to report prescription monitoring data for the controlled dangerous substances they dispense in the same system, format, and frequency as other dispensers in Maryland. PDMPs in seventeen other states and the District of Columbia require veterinarians to report controlled dangerous substances dispensing data to the PDMP.

Access to veterinarian prescription data will help the Program carry out its mission to monitor all Schedule II-V drugs dispensed in Maryland. MDH respectfully requests this Committee to approve SB 235 as a necessary measure to address the opioid epidemic and to tighten the existing reporting gap among dispensers.

This bill will not have a fiscal impact on MDH. If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs, at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura Herrera Scott".

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary