



TESTIMONY TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

SB0989: Health Insurance- Epinephrine Injectors- Limits on Cost Sharing (Epinephrine Cost Reduction Act of 2024)

POSITION: Support

BY: Linda Kohn, President

DATE: March 6, 2024

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. **The League believes that health care is a human right, and that every resident should have access to affordable, equitable, quality health care, including essential medications.**

The League of Women Voters Maryland thus supports **Senate Bill 989: Epinephrine Cost Reduction Act of 2024**, which would cap the cost of a twin-pack of medically necessary prescription epinephrine injectors for a covered individual to no more than \$60.

Epinephrine is a life-saving medication that treats potentially deadly allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) in children and adults with severe allergies. Because these reactions can happen within minutes of exposure, the epinephrine is delivered in an easy-to-use injectable form -- an "EpiPen" -- that can be quickly administered by an untrained person, or even by an affected child. **An EpiPen is thus a critically important medication to have on hand for the more than 33 million Americans with potentially life-threatening food allergies.**¹

EpiPens were previously priced low enough to enable parents of children with severe peanut allergies, for example, to have one auto-injector available at school and another at home. But the price of this life-saving medication has risen dramatically, so that it is no longer readily available to all children and adults who need it.

Last year Colorado, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Rhode Island² passed legislation limiting out-of-pocket costs for epinephrine auto-injectors, and in January 2024 the EPIPEN Act (Epinephrine's Pharma Inflated Price Ends Now Act) was introduced in Congress, which would cap the cost of EpiPens at \$60 per twin-pack.

Life-saving medications are useless if people can't afford them. Passage of this legislation would help Marylanders afford another life-saving medication, just as was done in 2022 with the Insulin Cost Reduction Act. **The League of Women Voters Maryland, representing 1,500+ concerned members throughout Maryland, urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 989.**

¹ <https://www.foodallergy.org/media-room/fare-endorses-rep-maxwell-alejandro-frosts-d-fl-10-epipen-act>

² <https://www.healio.com/news/allergy-asthma/20230712/new-jersey-caps-outofpocket-inhaler-epinephrine-autoinjector-costs>