



Letter of concern offered on behalf of:
EPIC PHARMACIES, INC.

The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk,

RE: LETTER OF CONCERN: HB0340 – Prescription Drug Affordability Board –
Authority for Upper Payment Limits and Funding (Lowering Prescription Drug Costs
for All Marylanders Act of 2024)

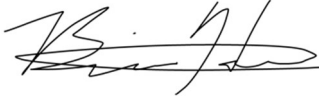
EPIC Pharmacies are positioned in hundreds of communities across the state and represent the front line of healthcare providers caring for Maryland communities and your constituents. As the most accessible members of the healthcare team and the drug experts, pharmacists are uniquely positioned to help patients find the most appropriate and affordable medications.

As you well know, the current landscape in pharmacy has hindered our ability to service patients and provide needed services in our communities due to the inability of pharmacies to be appropriately paid by State and local governments, Medicaid, and commercial payors. All these entities set reimbursement levels within pharmacies using the power of their PBM's take it or leave it contracts and often force medications to be dispensed at a loss. No one wants to make medications more affordable than community pharmacies, but we view this bill and the additional authority it grants the Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB) as yet another way to fund discounts through below cost reimbursements to pharmacies. Who is going to guarantee that these Upper Payment Limits are greater than the pharmacy cost to procure the drug, maintain its proper storage, dispense it to the patient, and complete all the unfunded mandates within the MD pharmacy practice act? Up to now, the committee has shown no interest in guaranteeing pharmacy is paid fairly for any one of these, much less the entire cost to provide prescriptions to the community.

My fear is that the State has not contemplated the downstream effects of this bill and what further reimbursement cuts might do to the community pharmacies across the state. We also

have concerns with the mandated perpetual funding of this board without any evidence that they will be able to impact the price of prescription drugs for Maryland consumers. My colleagues and I are always happy to work with the committee and the PDAB on any of these issues to ensure fair consumer pricing and the survival of community pharmacies near the homes of all Maryland citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian M. Hose". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Brian M. Hose, PharmD
EPIC PharmPAC Chairman
brian.hose@gmail.com