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 Shomrei Emenah Congregation
 Suburban Orthodox Congregation
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 Zionist Organization of America
 Baltimore District

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

**House Bill 340 - Prescription Drug Affordability Board - Authority for
 Upper Payment Limits and Funding (Lowering Prescription Drug Costs
 for All Marylanders Act of 2024)**

Health and Government Operations Committee

February 8, 2024

SUPPORT

Background: House Bill 340, (HB340) would expand on the 2019 Prescription Drug Affordability Board law. This law gave the Board the authority to implement upper payment limits to make high-cost drugs more affordable for state and local governments, which it will soon establish with the approval of the Legislative Policy Committee. HB340 would expand the Board's authority to make high-cost drugs more affordable for all Marylanders.

Written Comments: Written Testimony: The Baltimore Jewish Council (BJC) has long been concerned about the rising cost of health care, particularly pharmaceutical drugs. Drug costs are a major cause of higher health care premiums and cause significant financial challenges for our community members who live on fixed incomes. In fact, 45 percent of Maryland households struggle to afford their medications. This means that Marylanders are choosing between their needed medications and other basic necessities like food and shelter.

While we appreciate that drug manufacturers must earn enough to cover the underlying research and development costs associated with developing new drugs and bringing them to the market, too many examples exist of manufacturers dramatically increasing prices for life-saving drugs with little or no logical rationale.

For these reasons, we as for a favorable report on HB340.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

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