



MARYLAND SOCIETY OF
HEALTH-SYSTEM PHARMACY

March 213, 2023

The Honorable Melony Griffith
Chair, Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

FAVORABLE SUPPORT: SB647/HB693 State Board of Pharmacy - Board Membership and Delegated Pharmacy Acts

Dear Chair Griffith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Society of Health-System Pharmacists is writing to express **FAVORABLE SUPPORT for bill SB647/HB693.**

Healthcare is rapidly changing, and we must adapt to better support patients' healthcare decisions. With recent changes in the healthcare landscape, including the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, the challenges faced through the COVID pandemic as well as efforts to improve the provision of equitable quality care, sustainable changes are needed in the healthcare delivery system. In recent years, more Marylanders are insured¹ and seeking accessible care in their communities with flexibility of scheduling that suits busy lives. Pharmacy professionals are well trained and qualified, are highly accessible² and have demonstrated the ability to safely meet the medication related needs of Marylanders. The elements of this bill, including pharmacy technician representation on the board of pharmacy, the ability to delegate administrative tasks to remote staff and the allowance of mechanical administration of vaccines by trained pharmacy technicians and interns serves the growing and changing health care needs of Marylanders in innovative and sustainable ways.

Board of Pharmacy Membership: Pharmacy technicians have served as the backbone for pharmacy operations and clinical care over the last several decades in the state of Maryland. Pharmacy technicians are seated on the pharmacy boards in Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, Utah, Vermont, and Washington.³ Pharmacy board activities that affect technicians include establishing registration and certification requirements, taking disciplinary actions, and defining technicians' scope of practice—including advanced roles such as administering vaccines, product verification (tech-check-tech), and obtaining medication histories from patients. The addition of a pharmacy technician to the Maryland Board of Pharmacy membership will help promote and engage pharmacy technicians across the state for continued growth in the profession.

Delegation of Remote Administrative Tasks: Allowing flexible work schedules for pharmacy technicians, will enhance healthcare efficiency and improve patient outcomes. Furthermore, with several lifestyle changes and options for remote work in the post-pandemic world, pharmacy technicians are able to fulfill many administrative tasks while being offsite. The addition of offsite data entry will allow flexibility for pharmacy technicians to support multiple pharmacies, rather than just one when completing prescription entry, order entry, insurance processing, adjudicating claims, and other administrative functions.

Delegation of Mechanical Administration of Vaccines: In October 2020, federal guidance allowed pharmacy technicians across the nation to administer vaccinations under the supervision of a pharmacist,



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and since then several states have adopted similar guidance. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the ability for trained pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations contributed to the overall goal of public health efforts to increase vaccination rates across the state. Pharmacy technicians undergo specific hands-on training to provide immunizations to the Maryland population and are already doing so under the PREP act.⁴ We support the ability of trained pharmacy technicians to provide the mechanical administration of any vaccine permitted to be administered by pharmacists, with clinical decisions regarding vaccines residing with the pharmacist. This represents an additional opportunity for pharmacy technicians to assume an advanced role that improves overall health outcomes.

We are confident that this bill promotes the health and well-being of Maryland constituents. We hope to gain your support on bill **SB647/HB693**. Thank you for your consideration and do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

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References:

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2. Berenbrok LA, Tang S, Gabriel N, et al. Access to community pharmacies: A nationwide geographic information systems cross-sectional analysis. *J Am Pharm Assoc* (2003). 2022;62(6):1816-1822.e2.
3. Traynor K. Pharmacy technicians find influence, acceptance as pharmacy board members. *Am J Health Syst Pharm*. 2022;79(15):1221-1222. doi:10.1093/ajhp/zxac174
4. HHS.gov. Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act. <https://aspr.hhs.gov/legal/PREPAct/Pages/default.aspx>