



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 340**

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

Before the House Health and Government Operations Committee

By Vincent DeMarco, President, Maryland Health Care For All! Coalition

February 8, 2024

Madam Chair, Madam Vice-Chair, and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee, on behalf of the over 450 faith, community, labor, business and health care organizations which are part of our Maryland Health Care For All! Coalition, we strongly urge you to support HB 340. This legislation builds on the landmark Prescription Drug Affordability Board law you enacted in 2019 which created the nation's first Prescription Drug Affordability Board and gave it the authority, with the approval of the Legislative Policy Committee, to use upper payment limits to make high cost drugs more affordable for state and local governments in Maryland. HB 340 would expand the Board's authority to make high cost drugs more affordable for all Marylanders. Three states, Colorado, Minnesota and Washington State, have enacted legislation modeled on our 2019 law which gives their Prescription Drug Affordability Boards full authority to help everyone in their states afford high cost drugs.

As you know very well, drugs don't work if people can't afford them. As you can see from the attached poll recently conducted by respected pollster OpinionWorks, 45 percent of Maryland households have had trouble affording their necessary medications. As you have heard today this translates into people not taking the medications they need or rationing how much they take or depriving themselves of other necessities. In addition, we all pay because insurers pay an exorbitant amount for high cost drugs, with CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield stating that one third of their premium costs are because of high cost drug costs. Finally, governments and health officials often can't afford the necessary medicines they need to address overdoses or other public health problems because of the skyrocketing costs of naloxone, EpiPen's and other needed medications.

This is why as the OpinionWorks poll shows, over 80 percent of Marylanders support giving the Board the authority it needs to use upper payment limits to make high cost drugs more affordable for all Marylanders. That is also why our broad coalition (see attached logo flyer and list) and Maryland's local leaders urge you to enact HB 340. Attached for you are letters written by many of them in strong support of the legislation, and you can view a video compilation of their support [linked here](#).

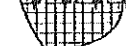
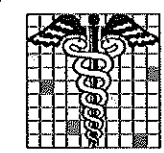
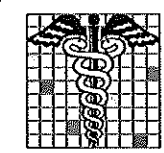
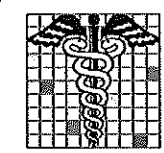
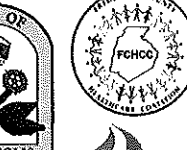
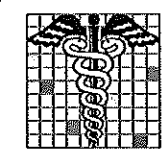
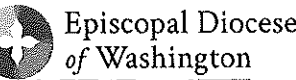
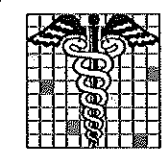
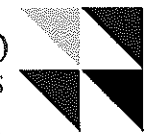
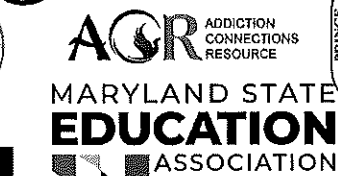
While we are pleased with the progress the Board has made under Chair Van Mitchell, this legislation will give them the authority they need to help all Marylanders afford their high cost drugs. We thank Vice Chair Bonnie Cullison and Delegate Jennifer White Holland for introducing this measure and we thank you, Madam Chair, and all the Members of this Committee for your leadership on this issue which has made our legislation a model for other states across the country.

2600 St. Paul Street Baltimore, MD 21218

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# Maryland Prescription Drug Affordability Coalition



**To: Vincent DeMarco, President  
Maryland Health Care For All Coalition**

**From: Steve Raabe, President  
OpinionWorks LLC**

**Date: September 11, 2023**

**Subject: Maryland Poll: Attitudes about Prescription Drug Affordability Board**

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#### **OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY**

The Maryland Health Care For All Coalition commissioned this statewide poll of Maryland registered voters to assess public opinion on issues surrounding prescription drug affordability and a proposal to expand the authority of Maryland's Prescription Drug Affordability Board.

These findings are based on our statewide poll of 1,090 registered voters, conducted online and by telephone from August 10 to 17, 2023. The poll has a potential sampling error of  $\pm 3.0\%$  at the 95% confidence level. A more detailed methodology statement is found at the end of this memorandum.

#### **Summary of Findings**

This statewide poll shows widespread concern among Maryland voters about prescription drug costs, resulting in overwhelming support for Maryland's Prescription Drug Affordability Board. Furthermore, voters overwhelmingly favor expanding the Board's authority so it can limit high drug costs for all Marylanders. That support cuts across all party lines, with very strong support from Democrats, Republicans, and Independents.

#### **DETAILED FINDINGS**

##### **Prescription Drug Affordability Board: Strong and Growing Support among Maryland Voters**

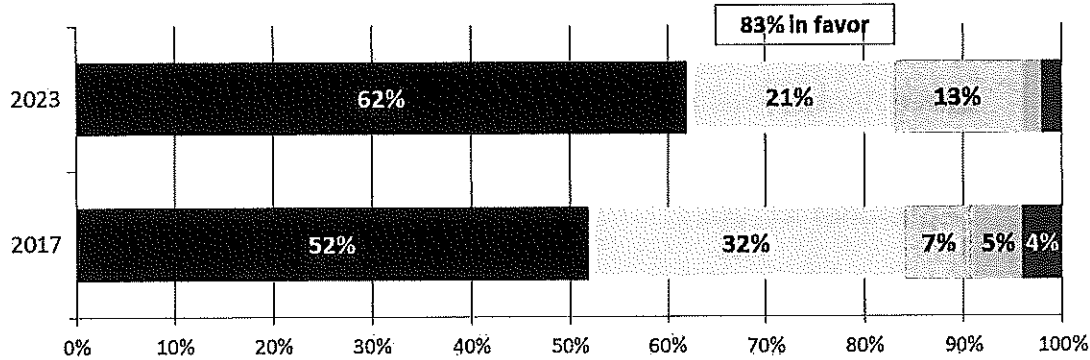
More than four out of five voters (83%) favor having a Prescription Drug Affordability Board with the power to make high-cost drugs more affordable. Almost two-thirds (62%) of voters favor the Board *strongly*.

This very strong support for the Board has only increased since we first asked about it in 2017, before the Board was enacted. At that time, 52% percent of Maryland voters strongly favored creating a board and 32% somewhat favored it. Almost one in ten voters opposed the concept, opposition that has nearly vanished today.

Note that only one-fifth (21%) of voters in the current poll said they knew about the Board before hearing it described in the poll, suggesting that there is much more work to do to share the concept with voters.

## Growing Support for Prescription Drug Affordability Board

■ Strongly favor    ■ Somewhat favor    □ Not sure or no opinion    ■ Somewhat oppose    ■ Strongly oppose



In 2019, Maryland became the first state in the nation to create a Prescription Drug Affordability Board, which is an independent body with the authority to examine the evidence and establish more affordable costs for expensive prescription drugs. Based on this description, do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose a Maryland Prescription Drug Affordability Board with the power to make high-cost drugs more affordable?  
 (Question asked with slightly different wording in 2017.)

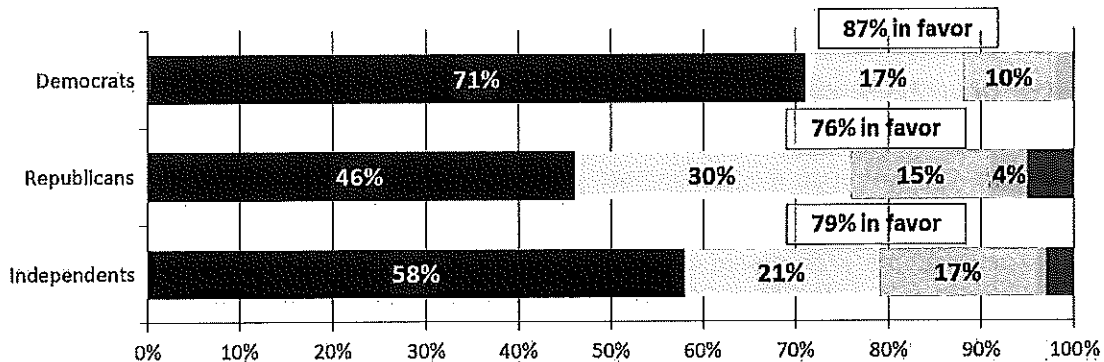
In this partisan age, it is significant that support for the Affordability Board crosses all party lines:

- More than three-quarters of Republicans (76%) favor the Board, with a near majority of 46% strongly in favor.
- Four out of five Independent voters (79%) favor it, with 58% strongly in favor.
- Among Democrats, support climbs to 87%, with 71% strongly in favor of the Board.

## Prescription Drug Affordability Board

Support by Political Party

■ Strongly favor    ■ Somewhat favor    □ Not sure or no opinion    ■ Somewhat oppose    ■ Strongly oppose



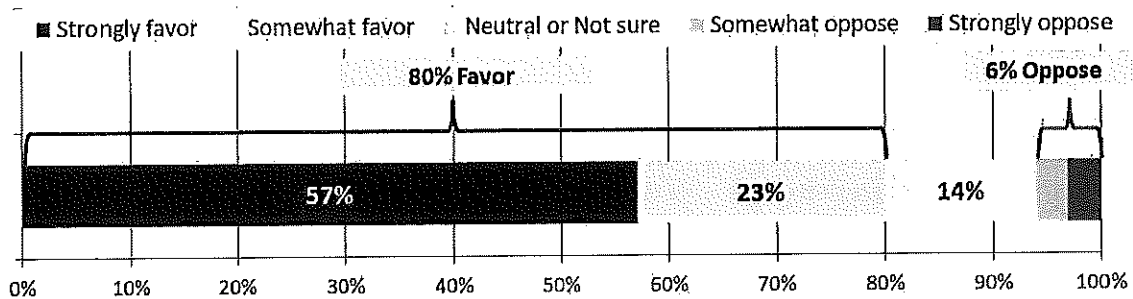
Based on this description, do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose a Maryland Prescription Drug Affordability Board with the power to make high-cost drugs more affordable?

**Overwhelming Support for Expanding the Authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board**

Currently, the Board only has the authority to limit high drug costs for state and local governments, not for most average Marylanders. Thinking forward, voters strongly favor expanding the Board’s authority much further to limit high drug costs for all Marylanders.

The support is overwhelming. Eighty percent of Marylanders favor expanding the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board. A solid 57% majority *strongly* favor the expansion. Only 6% of Maryland voters oppose this proposal.

**Overwhelming Support for Expanding the Board’s Authority**

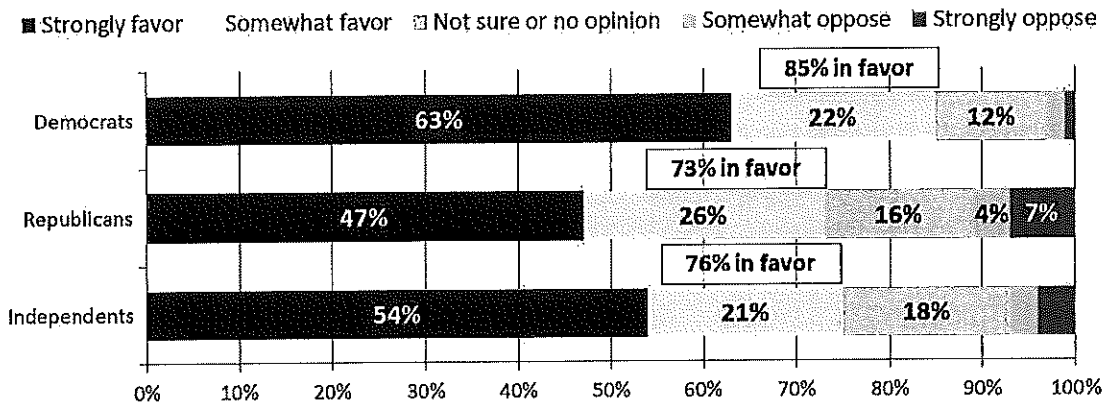


Currently, the Board only has the authority to limit high drug costs for state and local governments – for example, for government employees, jails, and schools. It cannot set limits on what most Maryland residents pay for their prescription drugs. Would you favor or oppose expanding the authority of the Board so it can limit high drug costs for all Marylanders?

Support for this proposal is very strong regardless of political party. Seventy-three percent of Republicans, 76% of Independents, and 85% of Democrats across Maryland support expanding the Board’s authority. Opposition is very small, regardless of political party identification.

**Expanding the Board’s Authority**

*Support by Political Party*



Currently, the Board only has the authority to limit high drug costs for state and local governments – for example, for government employees, jails, and schools. It cannot set limits on what most Maryland residents pay for their prescription drugs. Would you favor or oppose expanding the authority of the Board so it can limit high drug costs for all Marylanders?

**Political Impact of Legislators’ Position on Prescription Drug Affordability Board**

This overwhelming support for expanding the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board translates into a potential major impact on General Assembly contests next year. This poll found that this issue could cause large swings in voter support – *even causing many voters to oppose legislative candidates of their own party.*

As the table below indicates, on the so-called generic ballot, if the election were held today Democratic legislative candidates would start off with a 29-point advantage based on partisan preferences across the state. Asked who they would support in the next state legislative elections, 53% of voters said they are more likely to vote for the Democratic candidates while 24% would favor the Republicans.

Learning of a hypothetical Democrat in their district who supports expanding the authority of the Board and a hypothetical Republican who opposes that, **the margin for the Democrat rose to a resounding 48 percentage points** (64% for the Democrat vs. 16% for the Republican).

However, in a different matchup where the Republican supports expanding the authority of the Board and the Democrat opposes it, the Democratic advantage was completely reversed, with the Republican receiving support from 43% of voters, compared to only 24% for the Democrat – a 19-point margin for the Republican. **This represents a massive 67-point swing in voter support – an unusual outcome in this partisan age – and a signal about how strongly felt voters’ opinions are about prescription drug costs.**

**Support for Legislative Candidates Based on Their Position on PDAB**

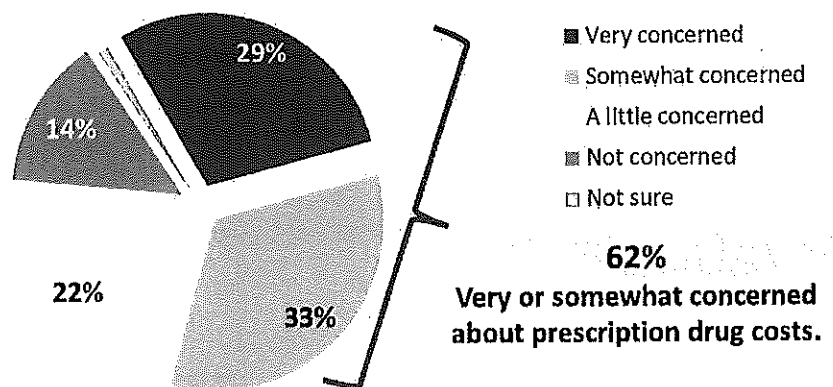
	Support the Democratic Candidate	Support the Republican Candidate	Margin
Generic Ballot in State Legislative Elections	53%	24%	Democrat +29%
Democrat Supports PDAB Expansion; Republican Opposes	64%	16%	Democrat +48%
Republican Supports PDAB Expansion; Democrat Opposes	24%	43%	Republican +19%
<p>“In the next state legislative elections, are you more likely to vote for... (rotate): the Democratic candidates or the Republican candidates?”</p> <p>(Rotate order of next two questions):</p> <p>“If you learned that the <u>Democratic</u> candidate in your legislative district <u>supported</u> expanding the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board while the <u>Republican</u> candidate <u>opposed</u> it, who would you be more likely to vote for (rotate): the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?”</p> <p>“If you learned that the <u>Republican</u> candidate in your legislative district <u>supported</u> expanding the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board while the <u>Democratic</u> candidate <u>opposed</u> it, who would you be more likely to vote for (rotate): the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?”</p>			

### Great Concern About Affording Prescription Drugs

Several factors help explain this overwhelming support and large political impact. One of these is a strong concern among Marylanders about prescription drug costs.

Nearly two-thirds (62%) are very or somewhat concerned “personally” about the cost of prescription drugs. More than a quarter of Maryland voters (29%) said they are “very concerned personally.” Only a small minority (14%) are not concerned about drug costs.

## Personal Concern about Prescription Drug Costs

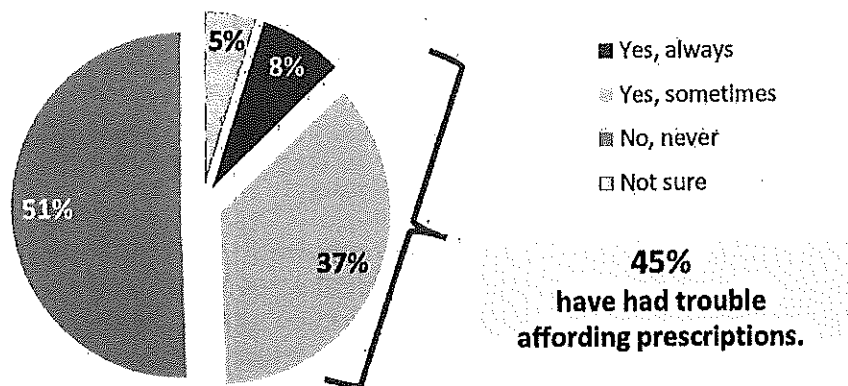


How much does the cost of prescription drugs concern you, personally? Would you say you are very concerned personally, somewhat concerned, a little concerned, or not personally concerned about it?

### Trouble Affording Prescription Drugs

This concern about prescription drugs is often founded on personal experience. A sobering 45% of Marylanders – nearly half – indicated that they always or sometimes have had trouble affording prescription medications.

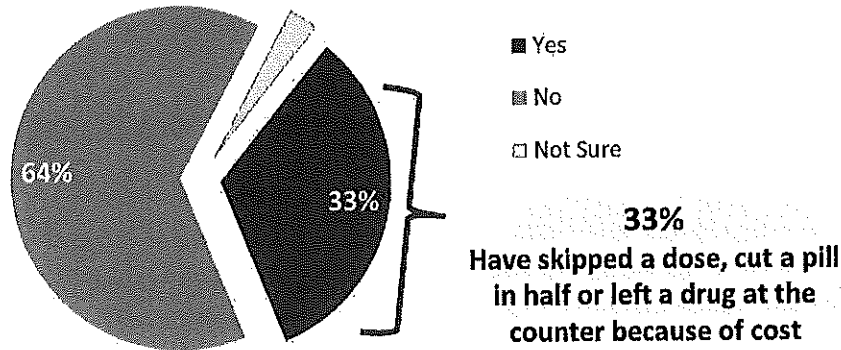
## Trouble Affording Prescription Medications



Do you or other members of your household ever have trouble affording prescription medications?

This is manifested in the real-life outcome that one-third (33%) of Marylanders said they have “skipped a dose, cut a pill in half, or left a drug at the counter” *because of cost*.

### Skipping a Dose Due to Cost

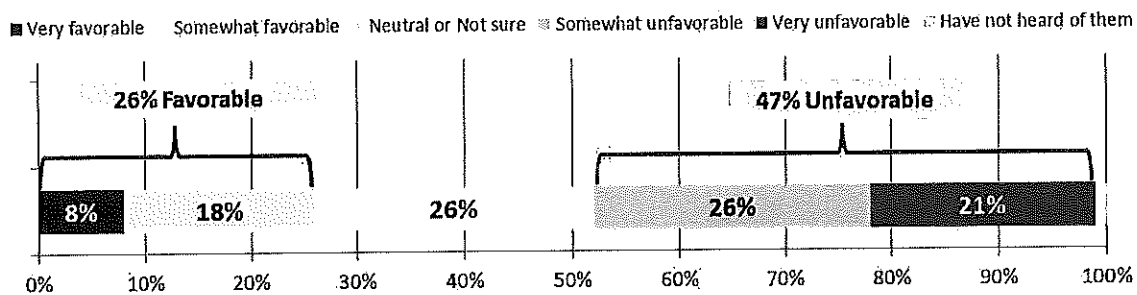


Because of cost, have you ever skipped a dose, cut a pill in half, or left a drug at the pharmacy counter?

### How Marylanders Feel About Pharmaceutical Companies

Another factor that may help explain strong support for the Prescription Drug Affordability Board is voters’ attitude toward the pharmaceutical industry. Only 26% of voters view the industry favorably, while nearly twice as many (47%) view it unfavorably. About one-quarter (26%) of Marylanders have neutral views about the pharmaceutical industry.

### Pharmaceutical Industry Favorability



Following is a list of people and groups. For each one, please say if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, neutral, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion. If you have not heard of them, just say so.

...The pharmaceutical industry.

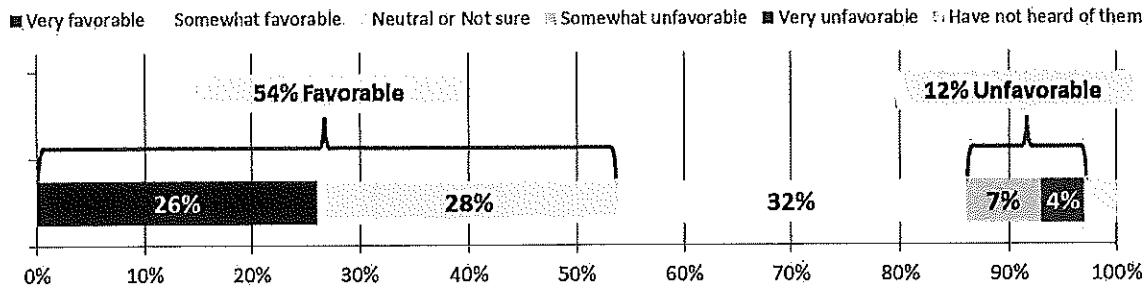
The low favorability for pharmaceutical companies cuts across party lines. Democrats and Republicans view the industry nearly identically, with 28% of Democrats and 29% of Republicans with favorable views. Unfavorability towards the industry is 45% among Democrats and 44% among Republicans. Interestingly, Independents were much less favorable towards pharmaceutical companies, with only 15% of viewing them favorably and 53% viewing them unfavorably.



**A Contrast with AARP**

For purposes of comparison, the AARP has a vastly more favorable standing with voters. Over half of respondents have a favorable view of the AARP (54%). Very few voters have an unfavorable view (12%), while 32% were neutral.

**AARP Favorability**



Following is a list of people and groups. For each one, please say if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, neutral, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion. If you have not heard of them, just say so.

...AARP.

**Key Voter Attitudes**

As an additional step in helping explain voter sentiment on prescription drug costs, the poll tested several attitudes, including arguments that the pharmaceutical industry has made in opposing the Prescription Drug Affordability Board. The table on the following page summarizes voter response to these attitudinal questions. This is a summary:

- Marylanders demonstrate a sense of empathy and social justice, with 83% agreeing with the statement, "It bothers me that many Marylanders can't afford their medicines, sometimes having to choose between paying for their prescriptions or paying for rent and groceries."
- They indicate that drug companies may have overstepped the boundaries of fairness, with 80% agreeing with the statement, "I don't object to drug companies making a profit, but their huge markups just aren't fair."
- Maryland voters object to high CEO pay, with 78% agreeing with the statement, "Drug companies pay their executives lavish salaries and make enormous profits. Average Marylanders get gouged while CEOs get rich."
- Meanwhile, most Marylanders do not believe the pharmaceutical industry's core argument that limiting drug costs will jeopardize research, with only 30% agreeing with the statement, "Controlling prescription drug costs will reduce the ability to fund life-saving research."
- Relatively few voters believe limiting drug costs could cost jobs in Maryland, with only 23% agreeing with the statement, "Limiting drug costs will hurt jobs, because it will force bio-medical businesses in Maryland to shut down and lay off their employees."

## Maryland Poll: Attitudes about Prescription Drug Affordability Board

September 11, 2023

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	Strongly Agree	Total Agree	Democrats	Republicans	Others
It bothers me that many Marylanders can't afford their medicines, sometimes having to choose between paying for their prescriptions or paying for rent and groceries.	62%	83%	88%	78%	79%
I don't object to drug companies making a profit, but their huge markups just aren't fair.	55%	80%	81%	79%	78%
Drug companies pay their executives lavish salaries and make enormous profits. Average Marylanders get gouged while CEOs get rich.	52%	78%	81%	75%	74%
Controlling prescription drug costs will reduce the ability to fund life-saving research.	13%	30%	30%	38%	22%
Limiting drug costs will hurt jobs, because it will force bio-medical businesses in Maryland to shut down and lay off their employees.	9%	23%	23%	28%	17%

### Methodology

#### How This Poll was Conducted

A total of 1,090 interviews were conducted statewide August 10-17, 2023 among randomly selected Maryland registered voters. A cross-section of Marylander registered voters were surveyed online, and live telephone interviewers reached additional voters on both wireless and landline telephones, to ensure the poll best represented all segments of the electorate. Sampling targets were adhered to throughout the interviewing process to ensure that the sample represented the statewide electorate geographically, by political party, gender, age, and race or ethnicity. Following interviewing, statistical weights were applied to ensure the sample most closely mirrored the characteristics of the statewide electorate. This poll produces a margin of sampling error no greater than  $\pm 3.0\%$  at the 95% confidence level, meaning that at least 19 times out of 20 the actual results would differ by no more than that margin if every registered voter in the state had been interviewed.

#### Brief Background on OpinionWorks

OpinionWorks is a non-partisan firm that conducts frequent opinion studies at the state and local level across the country. Since 2007 we have been the polling organization for *The Baltimore Sun* newspaper in Maryland and have polled for numerous other media and advocates throughout the nation. We are engaged by state and local government agencies from Delaware to Oregon to assess public needs and preferences. We measure health attitudes and practices for public health departments and advocates, assess alumni engagement and prospective student expectations for colleges and universities, evaluate donor and volunteer relationships for non-profit organizations, and study human decision-making to inform behavior change efforts on environmental and health questions.



Angela D. Alsobrooks  
County Executive

TO: Chair Mitchell, Prescription Drug Affordability Board Members, Council Chairs  
Diana and Nicole, and Members of the Stakeholder Council

FROM: Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, Howard County Executive Calvir Ball, Charles County Commissioner President Reuben B. Collins, Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich, Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater, Baltimore County Executive John Olszewski, Jr., Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman, and Baltimore City Mayor Brandon M. Scott

DATE: December 19, 2022

SUBJECT: Prescription Drug Affordability for Maryland's Local Governments

We the undersigned Maryland local elected leaders are writing to reiterate our strong support for Maryland's landmark Prescription Drug Affordability Board, the Stakeholder Council, and the important work you are all doing to address the issue of high-cost drugs. This is an issue that touches all corners of our state, and as such, the Maryland Association of Counties and many of us individually advocated for the enactment of the legislation to create this Board in 2019. We are all very pleased with the progress you have made and look forward to your future work to fully implement the law to ensure all Marylanders are able to afford the medicine they need.

As local leaders, we are especially interested in the Board's initial authority granted by the 2019 law, which gives you the authority to put upper payment limits on what state and local governments pay for high-cost drugs. As the cost of prescription drugs continues to escalate, we strongly urge you to use this authority as soon as possible. These costs hurt our ability to provide comprehensive health coverage for our employees and impact our budgets as we see more and more of the money we should be using to improve county services go to paying ever increasing drug costs.

We also urge you at the appropriate time to ask the General Assembly to broaden your authority to allow you to put upper payment limits on what all Marylanders pay for high-cost drugs. We will be there to back you up. Just as county budgets are hurt by high-cost drugs, so are Maryland families. As you know so well, drugs don't work if people can't afford them, and no one should be forced to choose between their medicine and other necessities, like rent and groceries. Marylanders from across the state joined us for a series of forums hosted in our counties with the Maryland Health Care For All! Coalition and AARP Maryland—there, we heard loud and clear from our constituents how high-cost drugs are hurting them and their families. Many of these stories are featured in the report the Maryland Health Care for All! Coalition has compiled summarizing these forums held this past Fall and in 2020.

We are very proud of Maryland's leadership role in making high-cost drugs more affordable and the fact that other states are following our lead. With your terrific leadership, Maryland can stay at the forefront on this life-saving issue.



**THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

October 25, 2023

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

The residents of Prince George's County need your immediate help in lowering the price of expensive prescription drugs. Too many of our constituents face daily choices on whether to purchase vital medications, buy food or pay rent. Meanwhile, pharmaceutical CEO's make astronomical salaries and drug companies fill the airwaves with expensive television advertising.

In 2019, the Maryland General Assembly created the Prescription Drug Affordability Board with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive prescription drugs purchased by the State and local governments. We look forward to substantial savings on pharmaceutical expenses in our budget once the Board puts these limits in place.

Yet it is only fair that everyone in our County enjoy these savings, not just those who work in our government. I urge you to make it one of your highest priorities to expand the authority of the Board so that everyone who lives in this State can receive the benefits of making expensive prescription drugs more affordable. The results of recent survey research demonstrate that doing so is a high priority for the public as well.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela Alsobrooks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Angela Alsobrooks  
County Executive



## HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

Calvin Ball  
Howard County Executive  
cball@howardcountymd.gov

[www.howardcountymd.gov](http://www.howardcountymd.gov)  
FAX 410-313-3051

November 13, 2023

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

On behalf of the more than 300,000 residents who call Howard County home, we appreciate your partnership in addressing the rising cost of expensive prescription drugs. Too many of our residents face daily choices on whether to purchase vital medications, buy food or pay rent.

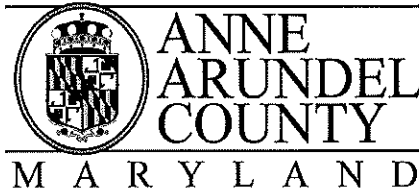
We are grateful that, in 2019, the Maryland General Assembly created the Prescription Drug Affordability Board with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive prescription drugs purchased by the State and local governments. We look forward to substantial savings on pharmaceutical expenses in our budget once the Board puts these limits in place.

Yet it is only fair that everyone in our county enjoy these savings, not just those who work in our government. I respectfully request you to make it one of your highest priorities to expand the authority of the Board so that everyone who lives in this State can receive the benefits of making expensive prescription drugs more affordable. The results of recent survey research demonstrate that doing so is a high priority for the public as well.

I firmly believe that this battle between working people and prescription drug companies has been going on for too long, and it hasn't been a fair fight. Maryland residents don't deserve to go into financial ruin if they or their loved ones face major health issues. We can and we must do better for our all Marylanders. I thank you for your consideration of this important request and look forward to seeing you at the bill hearing.

Sincerely,

Calvin Ball  
Howard County Executive



**Office of the County Executive  
STEUART PITTMAN**

November 9, 2023

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

The nearly 600,000 residents of Anne Arundel County need your immediate help in lowering the price of expensive prescription drugs. Too many of our constituents face daily choices on whether to purchase vital medications or buy food or pay rent. Meanwhile, pharmaceutical CEOs make astronomical salaries and drug companies fill the airwaves with expensive television advertising.

We are grateful that, in 2019, the Maryland General Assembly created the Prescription Drug Affordability Board with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive prescription drugs purchased by the State and local governments. We look forward to substantial savings on pharmaceutical expenses in our budget once the Board puts these limits in place.

Yet it is only fair that everyone in our County enjoys these savings, not just those who work for our County. I, therefore, urge you to make it one of your highest priorities to expand the authority of the Board so that everyone who lives in this State can receive the benefits of making expensive prescription drugs more affordable. The results of recent survey research demonstrate that doing so is a high priority for the public as well.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. See you at the bill hearing!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stuart Pittman".

Stuart Pittman  
County Executive

***The Best Place - For All***

www.aacounty.org | 44 Calvert Street, Annapolis, MD 21401 | (410)-222-1821  
countyexecutive@aacounty.org



*Charles County Commissioners*

REUBEN B. COLLINS, II, ESQ., PRESIDENT

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones,

The Charles County residents need your immediate help in lowering the price of expensive prescription drugs. Too many of our constituents face daily choices on whether to purchase vital medications or buy food or pay rent. Meanwhile, pharmaceutical CEO's make astronomical salaries and drug companies fill the airwaves with expensive television advertising.

We are grateful that, in 2019, the Maryland General Assembly created the Prescription Drug Affordability Board with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive prescription drugs purchased by the State and local governments. We look forward to substantial savings on pharmaceutical expenses in our budget once the Board puts these limits in place.

Yet it is only fair that everyone in our County enjoy these savings, not just those who work for our County. I, therefore, urge you to make it one of your highest priorities to expand the authority of the Board so that everyone who lives in this State can receive the benefits of making expensive prescription drugs more affordable. The results of recent survey research demonstrate that doing so is a high priority for the public as well.



Affordable Rx Drug  
Page 2  
November 1, 2023

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. See you at the bill hearing. Please contact my Chief of Staff, Ms. Crystal Hunt, at [HuntC@charlescountymd.gov](mailto:HuntC@charlescountymd.gov) or 301-645-0550 if additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RBC', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq.



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich  
*County Executive*

DECEMBER 4, 2023

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

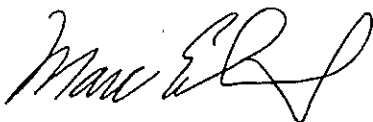
Since 2019, Maryland has been a leader in reigning in the cost of prescription drugs with the establishment of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board. Accessing affordable prescriptions is a life or death issue for our residents, which is why I write to you today to urge you to make it a priority of the 2024 Session to expand the authority of the Board so that all Marylanders can receive the benefits of making expensive prescription drugs more affordable.

Currently, the Prescription Drug Affordability Board can set upper payment limits for prescription drugs purchased by state, county, or local governments. We look forward to substantial savings on pharmaceutical expenses in our County budget once the Board's limits are in place. Yet it is only right that everyone in our County enjoy these savings, not just those who work in our government. Therefore, it is critical that the Board should be enabled to expand upper payment limits to all purchases of prescription drug throughout the State.

MOORE, FERGUSON, JONES  
DECEMBER 4, 2023  
Page 2 of 2

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. Should you have any questions, please contact Sonia Mora at [Sonia.Mora@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Sonia.Mora@montgomerycountymd.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc Elrich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marc" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Elrich".

Marc Elrich  
County Executive



One Park Place | Suite 475 | Annapolis, MD 21401-3475  
1-866-542-8163 | Fax: 410-837-0269  
aarp.org/md | md@aarp.org | twitter: @aarpmd  
facebook.com/aarpmd

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
Annapolis, MD21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
State House  
Annapolis, MD21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 2140

October 12, 2023

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones,

The high price of prescription drugs continues to burden the 850,000 members of AARP Maryland and their families. Many of our members must choose between paying for their diabetes injections, heart medication, anti-cholesterol regimes, or other prescriptions or, instead, to buy food or make their rent payment. Too often, important medications are left at the pharmacist's cash register because customers can't afford them.

Fortunately, in 2019, the Maryland General Assembly established the first-in-the-nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive prescription drugs purchased by the state and local governments. The members of the Board and the Stakeholders Council are of the highest caliber, and we applaud their efforts.

With the Board now working to apply upper payment limits to the most expensive prescription drugs, it is the appropriate time to expand its authority to set those limits on the expensive prescriptions purchased by *every* Marylander. Enacting such legislation is among our highest priorities. According to recent survey research, an overwhelming majority of Maryland voters would support this expansion effort.

Thank you for your support for this important matter. We look forward to working with you in the 2024 Legislative Session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Campbell".

State President

*Baptist Pastors' Conference of Baltimore and Vicinity*

c/o Greater St. John Baptist Church

209 Walnut Avenue

Baltimore, Maryland 21222

(410) 282-0088

February 1, 2024

The Honorable Governor Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-  
1925

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Maryland Senate  
State House, H-107, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates  
State House H-101, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, Speaker Jones:

I pray this letter finds you well and wish you a prosperous new Year! We, the members of the Baptist Pastors' Conference of Baltimore & Vicinity (BPCBV), appreciate legislators' ongoing efforts to legislate solutions to address health and social disparities impacting the quality of life for Maryland residents. BPCBV membership is comprised of clergy who meet for the purpose of addressing pastoral concerns, as well as the members of our congregations.

As faith leaders and laypersons, we hear stories about the challenges our congregates face having to make a decision on which bills they will pay and/or forgo taking their medicine due to the high-cost of prescription drugs. We appreciate the fact that in 2019 the Maryland General Assembly established the first in the nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB) with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive drugs purchased by local and state government. The establishment of the PDAB is a great start; however, more needs to be done to reduce the cost of prescription drugs, such as give the board more authority in 2024. We urge you to expand the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board in 2024 so that it can set upper payment limits for high-cost drugs for all Maryland Residents.

Peace and Blessings!!!

*Jamal Foster*

Rev. Jamal Foster

*Clergy United for the Transformation of Sandtown*

1300 N. Fulton Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21217  
(410) 404-1070

February 1, 2024

The Honorable Governor Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1925

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Maryland Senate  
State House, H-107, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates  
State House H-101, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, Speaker Jones:

Since 2015, Clergy United for the Transformation of Sandtown (CUTS), a 501 (c) (3) CDC (Community Development Corp) non-profit organization, has been at the forefront of stabilizing and improving the life of Sandtown residents. CUTS is comprised of twelve faith-based institutions located on the West Side of Baltimore. They have volunteered their time and efforts to improve the Sandtown community through community development initiatives. Each institution has supported the residents of Sandtown by establishing group homes for homeless persons, providing linkage to health care projects, emergency food assistance programs, and partnerships to renovate housing. African American churches have long played a pivotal role in the economic development of Baltimore.

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for Sandtown residents by restoring, replenishing and renovating Sandtown. We believe in the holistic approach grounded in principles of empowerment, human rights, inclusion, social justice, self-determination, and collective action (Kenny, 2007). As such, we avail ourselves to be aware of as well as address challenges impacting the quality of life of residents living in the Sandtown community. One known challenge is the high costs of prescription drugs, forcing many residents to have to choose between purchasing their medicine or pay for other social needs.

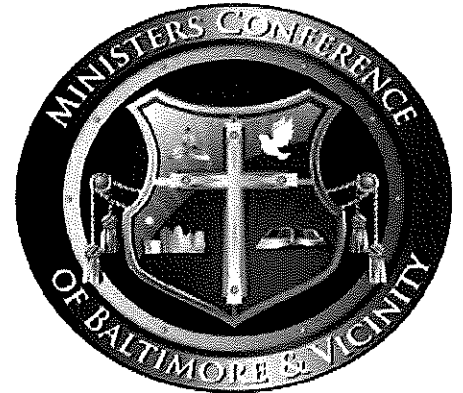
We know this is not news to you and other legislatures and want to extend appreciative feedback for the action taken in 2019 by the Maryland General Assembly established who the first in the nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB) with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive drugs purchased by local and state government. The establishment of the PDAB is a great start; however, more needs to be done to reduce the cost of prescription drugs, such as give the board more authority in 2024. We urge you to expand the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board in 2024 so that it can set upper payment limits for high-cost drugs for all Maryland Residents.

Best Regards,



Dr. Derrick Dewitt

# MINISTERS' CONFERENCE OF BALTIMORE AND VICINITY



January 2, 2024

The Honorable Governor Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1925

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Maryland Senate  
State House, H-107, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates  
State House H-101, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, Speaker Jones:

The Ministers' Conference of Baltimore & Vicinity (MCBV) is writing to thank you for the work you have done (in 2019 the Maryland General Assembly established the first in the nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB) with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive drugs purchased by local and state government to reduce the high costs of prescription drugs); and to encourage you to do more to address this challenge in the 2024 Maryland General Assembly.

The Ministers' Conference of Baltimore & Vicinity is more than 115 years old and is an organization comprised of more than 150 congregations whose focus is shifting more and more on caring for the "holistic" needs, in particular health care, for its members and the communities it serves. Our Civic Action Committee has an initiative, "And the Church Shall Lead", and one of its goals is to eradicate health disparities/inequalities.

It is not uncommon for us to have members whose congregants are impacted by the high- cost of prescription drugs, sometimes at the risk of not taking them, getting sick and ending up in the hospital. We realize more and more that our role is not just caring for the spiritual needs of congregants, but the whole person and our doing so is a moral obligation. We urge you in 2024 to continue the work you are doing to lower the high-cost of prescription drugs and expand the authority of the PDAB so that it can set upper payment limits for high-cost drugs for all Maryland residents.

In His Service,

Bishop Reginald Kennedy, [bishop@GTBCBaltimore.org](mailto:bishop@GTBCBaltimore.org). Dr. Sandra Conner,  
[revdrconner@gmail.com](mailto:revdrconner@gmail.com) (MCBV Correspondence Secretary)

**Ministers' Conference of Baltimore and Vicinity**  
3100 Walbrook Avenue | Baltimore, MD 21216

Phone: 410.383.9393 | Email: [ministersconferencebaltimore1@gmail.com](mailto:ministersconferencebaltimore1@gmail.com)

Dear Governor Moore:

The Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland (UULM-MD) thanks you for your commitment and leadership on health care. We totally agree with you that: "Healthcare is a basic human right that every Marylander deserves." We appreciate your being committed "to protecting and expanding health care access for thousands of folks across Maryland." One way of doing this is to invest in the Prescription Drug Affordability Board so that it has the authority to make high-cost drugs affordable to all Marylanders.

Maryland was a leader in authorizing this innovative state Board to tackle one of the biggest problems for Marylanders—the unfair pricing of prescription drugs. These costs have kept people from obtaining the prescriptions or having to choose paying for them instead of other essential expenses. It is not unusual for people to go into debt to pay what can be extraordinary expenses.

Advocates like ours overcame big Pharma to get the original authorization for the Board but the previous Administration slowed implementation down. We believe we can be successful again with your leadership and a supportive General Assembly.

The UULM-MD is an advocacy organization composed of Unitarian Universalists throughout Maryland. Since our founding in 2005, health care has been a priority and we are an active member of the Health Care for All Coalition.

Betty McGarvie Crowley  
Health Care Lead Advocate  
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry  
333 Dubois Road, Annapolis, MD 21401





**Delaware-Maryland Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1925

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Maryland Senate  
State House, H-107, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates  
State House, H-101, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Governor Moore; President Ferguson; Speaker Jones:

The Delaware-Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a faith community with a demographically diverse Maryland constituency extending from Red House to Ocean City. Our community has advocated for access to appropriate, adequate, and affordable health care for all people in the United States since 2003 (*Caring for Health*, ELCA). We include medical treatment in "appropriate and adequate care," and therefore in any measure of "affordable."

We were among advocates for the passage of the 2019 bill establishing a Maryland Prescription Drug Affordability Board to monitor and address pharmaceutical prices covered under the State's Medicaid program. We, likewise, supported SB202/HB279 of 2023 affirming the authority of PDAB to establish upper payment limits in certain indicated circumstances.

Drug cost monitoring for price containment benefits almost all medical clients. Expensive drugs can compromise the adequacy of medical treatment for anyone. This is a particular concern of our community when clients are already disadvantaged. When pricing is chiefly influenced by demand, as in the standard business model, "most expensive" could also mean "most needed."

Reviewing and regulating prices on the most expensive drugs sold in the State, as PDAB is authorized to do for State programs, would have a containment effect across its medical market. Several other states have already done this. We believe Maryland, as the innovator of prescription drug price review, should do the same.

Thank you for your public service, and attention.

Lee Hudson  
Assistant to the bishop for public policy, DE-MD Synod, ELCA



# THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
State House Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House  
State House Annapolis, MD 2140

December 22, 2023

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones,

The high price of prescription drugs continues to burden the residents of Maryland. Many still must choose between paying for their diabetes injections, heart medication, anti-cholesterol regimes, or other prescriptions or, instead, buying food or make their rent payment. Too often, important medications are left at the pharmacist's cash register because customers can't afford them.

Fortunately, in 2019, the Maryland General Assembly established the first-in-the-nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive prescription drugs purchased by the state and local governments. The members of the Board and the Stakeholders Council are of the highest caliber, and we applaud their efforts.

With the Board now working to apply upper payment limits to the most expensive prescription drugs, it is the appropriate time to expand its authority to set those limits on the expensive prescriptions purchased by every Marylander. Enacting such legislation is among our highest priorities. According to recent survey research, an overwhelming majority of Maryland voters would support this expansion effort.

Thank you for your support in this important matter. We look forward to working with you in the 2024 Legislative Session.

Sincerely,

The Rt. Rev. Eugene Taylor Sutton  
Bishop, Diocese of Maryland



THE COLLECTIVE  
EMPOWERMENT GROUP

## THE COLLECTIVE EMPOWERMENT GROUP, INC.

Board of Directors

January 10, 2024

Rev. Dr. Bobby Manning  
President

Rev. Dr. Renee Alston  
Rev. Dr. Gerald Folsom  
Pastor Omarl Hughes  
Bishop Anthony MacLin  
Rev. Dr. Anna Mosby  
Pastor Adrian Reeves  
Rev. Billy Staton  
Rev. Jonathan L. Weaver  
Rev. Joshua Kevin White  
Rev. Juan Wilder

de Raye Sisco, CCA  
Executive Director

Mldgett Parker, Esq.  
Legal Counsel

The Honorable Wes Moore Governor of Maryland State House Annapolis, MD 21401	The Honorable Bill Ferguson President of the Senate State House Annapolis, MD 20401	The Honorable Adrienne Jones Speaker of the House State House Annapolis, MD 20401
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Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

I hope this letter finds you well. On behalf of the pastors and church leaders of The Collective Empowerment Group, I am writing to express our deep concern about the exorbitant costs of prescription drugs in our state and to urgently request your support in expanding the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board, established in 2019. The current situation has placed an immense financial burden on countless Marylanders, and I believe it is crucial to take decisive action to alleviate this hardship. As pastors, we see the burden on our members every day. Many must choose between paying for prescriptions and buying food for their families. This is a choice no one in this country and certainly in the state of Maryland should ever have to make.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the rising costs of prescription medications have become a significant barrier to accessing essential healthcare for many individuals and families. The Prescription Drug Affordability Board has played a pivotal role in addressing this issue by evaluating and setting reasonable limits on the prices of certain prescription drugs purchased by state and local governments. However, we believe that it is imperative to extend their authority to cover a broader range of medications purchased by all Maryland residents, ensuring that all Marylanders can access the medications they need without facing financial hardship. By doing so, we can create a more equitable healthcare system that prioritizes accessibility and affordability for all residents of our great state.

Your leadership in this matter is crucial to ensuring that Maryland remains a state where healthcare is accessible and affordable for *everyone*.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue, and we look forward to witnessing positive change that will enhance the lives of Maryland residents.

Sincerely,

  
Dr. Bobby Manning  
President

*Collective Strength for Economic Empowerment*

*Our mission, as a Christian ministry, is to establish covenant relationships with member churches and community partnership agreements with financial institutions, businesses and other organizations, utilizing our collective strength for economic empowerment for member congregations.*

5827 Allentown Road, Camp Springs, MD 20746

• Tel: 301-704-4221

Email: [Office@EmpowerDMV.org](mailto:Office@EmpowerDMV.org) Website: <https://EmpowerDMV.org>



# PROGRESSIVE MARYLAND

P.O. Box 7595, Largo MD 20792

[ProgressiveMaryland.org](http://ProgressiveMaryland.org)

[Info@progressivemaryland.org](mailto:Info@progressivemaryland.org)

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The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

December 11, 2023

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones,

On behalf of our Board of Directors, our thousands of grassroots members across the state, and our affiliates who represent a broad range of labor and community groups I urge you to expand the authority of our state's Prescription Drug Affordability Board.

The high cost of prescription drugs is a significant impediment to the health and well being of everyday Marylanders, putting many people at risk, wondering how they can afford to cover the cost of drugs and still have enough money for other basic household needs. Too many people simply can't afford lifesaving and life supporting medications so they cut medications in half or postpone getting their prescriptions filled.

Our organization was one of the groups who supported the creation of the Board and we've been encouraged by the progress it's making to set upper payment limits on some of the most high-priced drugs that the state and local governments purchase. The implementation of this plan will result in important savings for our government entities, savings that can be applied to other valuable public goods and services.

Extending the upper payment limits to high-cost prescriptions purchased by **every** Marylander should be a top priority for our state in 2024. Please strengthen the authority and power of the Board in its crucial efforts to make medicines more affordable.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Patty Snee  
Progressive Maryland  
Lead Organizer, Statewide Healthcare Campaigns



Baptist Ministers' Night Conference of Baltimore & Vicinity  
5405 York Road  
Baltimore, Maryland 21212  
443.386.4739

January 3, 2024

The Honorable Governor Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1925

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Maryland Senate  
State House, H-107, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates  
State House H-101, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, Speaker Jones:

Happy New Year!!!!

We, the Baptist Ministers' Night Conference of Baltimore & Vicinity (BMNCBV), applaud your ongoing efforts to address health and social disparities impacting Maryland residents, negating the fact that one's zip code, race and other social determinants should not dictate the quality of life an individual lives. For your information, the BMNCBV is a faith-based organization designed to serve bi-vocational clergy, persons whose schedule does not permit them to attend conferences that meet during the day. BMNCBV was formed in 2010, and our mission is to educate, and equip members with tools to strengthen themselves, families, communities, and relationships with others and above all with God; to become advocates to eradicate "social ills," e.g., healthcare, housing, education, workforce/economic development, and public safety, that not only negatively impact and denigrate individual and community quality of life, but also create a sense of hopelessness and despair. Our affiliations, including membership are greater than 200 organizations, consisting of faith and community-based organizations, healthcare providers, civic and government entities, businesses, etc., (this number does not include individual organization membership (constituent) totals).

As faith leaders and laypersons, we hear stories about the challenges our congregates face having to make a decision on which bills they will pay and/or forgo taking their medicine due to the high-cost of prescription drugs. We appreciate the fact that in 2019 the Maryland General Assembly established the first in the nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB) with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive drugs purchased by local and state government. The establishment of the PDAB is a great start; however, more needs to be done to reduce the cost of prescription drugs, such as give the board more authority in 2024. We urge you to expand the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board in 2024 so that it can set upper payment limits for high-cost drugs for all Maryland Residents.

Peace and Blessings!!!

*Sandra Conner*

Rev. Dr. Sandra Conner  
BMNCBV President  
443.695.2447



The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
H-107, State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne  
Jones  
Speaker of the House  
H-101, State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

December 14, 2023

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones,

#MEAction Maryland is part of a patient advocacy group, #MEAction, whose “vision is a world where people with ME are believed, supported by systems that work, and have access to effective medical treatments<sup>1</sup>.” Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME) is a multi-system disease that causes profound metabolic dysfunction and is accompanied by physical and cognitive limitations. ME affects more than 3.3 million diagnosed Americans according to a recent CDC study<sup>2</sup> (this study acknowledges limitations in counting prevalence including that it requested diagnosed patients in a severely underdiagnosed population).

Skyrocketing prescription drug costs are a public health crisis, affecting patients who cannot afford their medications and contributing to rising health insurance premiums. Fortunately, in 2019, the Maryland General Assembly established the first-in-the-nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB). The PDAB has the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive prescription drugs purchased by the state and local governments.

Now, we urge you to support expanding the authority of the PDAB in 2024 to be able to set upper payment limits on high-cost drugs for ALL Marylanders. Many Marylanders with ME do not work for state and local governments. Expanding the authority of the PDAB will help patients with ME access the prescription drugs that they need.

Thank you for your leadership. Please support prescription drug affordability this upcoming 2024 legislative session.

Sincerely,

#MEAction Maryland Co-Chair  
[Maryland@MEAction.net](mailto:Maryland@MEAction.net)  
Twitter/X; IG: @MEActMaryland

<sup>1</sup> #MEAction. <https://www.meaction.net/> 20 Dec 2023

<sup>2</sup> Vahratian, Anjel et al. "Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in Adults: United States, 2021-2022" , no. 488, 2023.

**CENTRAL  
ATLANTIC  
CONFERENCE**

  
**UNITED  
CHURCH OF  
CHRIST**

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis MD 21401-1925

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Maryland Senate  
State House, H-107, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates  
State House, H-101, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis MD 21401

December 11, 2023

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, Speaker Jones:

The Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ is a faith community comprised of over 150 United Church of Christ congregations stretching from New Jersey to Virginia, over fifty of which are located throughout the state of Maryland. For more than thirty-five years the United Church of Christ ("UCC") has advocated for health care as a right and a priority for all people. As stewards of God's creation, we are called to prioritize the well-being of all individuals, including their access to necessary medications. Ensuring affordable prescription drugs aligns with the principles of justice, compassion, and the promotion of human dignity, as it enables individuals to live healthy and fulfilling lives.

We are pleased that in 2019, the Maryland General Assembly established the Prescription Drug Affordability Board, the first such entity in the country, with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive prescription drugs purchased by state and local governments. We are very grateful for their efforts.

Yet there is more work to be done in this area. Many state residents, including members of our congregations, are still affected by the high cost of prescription drugs. We do not believe it is just that people are forced to make difficult choices between their health care and other essential living expenses because of cost. We urge that the Maryland General Assembly in 2024 move to expand the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board so that upper payment limits can be established, making the high cost of drugs available for all Marylanders. This is a matter of economic justice and equity, and we hope that we can count on your support.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue, and for your dedicated service to the people of Maryland.

Sincerely,



Rev. Freeman L. Palmer  
Conference Minister  
Central Atlantic Conference



The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill  
Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
H-107, State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne  
Jones  
Speaker of the House  
H-101, State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

December 14, 2023

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones,

Skyrocketing prescription drug costs are a public health crisis, affecting patients who cannot afford their medications and contributing to rising health insurance premiums. Fortunately, in 2019, the Maryland General Assembly established the first-in-the-nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB) with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive prescription drugs purchased by the state and local governments.

We urge that Maryland expand the authority of the PDAB in 2024 to be able to set upper payment limits on high-cost drugs for ALL Marylanders. It is critical that the PDAB is given the authority it needs to make expensive medications more affordable for all Marylanders, because drugs don't work if people can't afford them.

The Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA) is a non-profit, statewide organization of public health professionals dedicated to improving the lives of all Marylanders through education efforts and advocacy of public policies consistent with our vision of achieving healthy Marylanders living in healthy communities. MdPHA is the state affiliate of the American Public Health Association, a 142-year-old professional organization with more than 50,000 members dedicated to improving population health and reducing health disparities that plague our state and our nation.

Sincerely,

*The Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA) is a nonprofit, statewide organization of public health professionals dedicated to improving the lives of all Marylanders through education, advocacy, and collaboration. We support public policies consistent with our vision of healthy Marylanders living in healthy, equitable, communities. MdPHA is the state affiliate of the American Public Health Association, a nearly 145-year-old professional organization dedicated to improving population health and reducing the health disparities that plague our state and our nation.*

**Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA)**  
PO Box 7045 · 6801 Oak Hall Ln · Columbia, MD 21045-9998  
GetInfo@MdPHA.org [www.mdpha.org](http://www.mdpha.org) 443.475.0242





People • Power • Progress YEARS

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

November 9, 2023

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones,

Public Citizen is a national non-profit organization with more than 500,000 members and supporters. The Access to Medicines program supports expanded access to prescription drugs in the United States and throughout the world through research, technical assistance and advocacy. We write you today in support of expanding availability of lower prices provided through the Maryland Drug Affordability Board.

High prescription drug prices continue to plague Marylanders and their families. Many Marylanders have skipped doses of necessary medications or were unable to fill prescriptions because of the high cost of drugs. In addressing these challenges, Maryland has been at the forefront of prescription drug pricing reform; after enacting the first prescription drug affordability board in the nation, several states have now followed suit. Public Citizen applauds Maryland's leadership in confronting the price gouging of pharmaceutical companies and delivering on popular demands to its residents.

As Maryland's Drug Affordability Board works to set upper payment limits for the most expensive drugs paid by the government, it is critical to extend these reforms to the many Marylanders who obtain their drugs from non-governmental sources. For example, more than half of Maryland's drug volume (56%) is paid for by commercial plans. If upper payment limits apply only to drugs paid on behalf of the government, there is a very real risk that the benefits of Maryland's innovative reforms will fail to materialize for a wide swath of Maryland residents. Drug affordability boards in other states, like Colorado and Minnesota, already have the comprehensive authority to set upper payment limits to the benefit of all residents. Now is the appropriate time to extend Maryland's Drug Affordability Board's authority to set limits on prescription drugs purchased by the majority of Marylanders.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical proposal to expand access to prescription drugs and improve the health and financial wellbeing of Marylanders.

Sincerely,

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

Peter Maybarduk

Director, Access to Medicines Program

Public Citizen



CAUCUS OF AFRICAN  
AMERICAN LEADERS  
UNITY WITHOUT UNIFORMITY

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1925

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Maryland Senate  
State House H-107, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates  
State House H-101, State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

January 9, 2024

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, Speaker Jones,

The Caucus of African American Leaders is a community-based coalition of over 150 members stretching throughout the State of Maryland. For more than a decade the Caucus of African American Leaders has advocated for health care as a right and a priority for all people. As stewards of God's creation, we are called to prioritize the well-being of all individuals, including their access to necessary medications. Ensuring affordable prescription drugs aligns with the principles of justice, compassion, and the promotion of human dignity, as it enables individuals to live healthy and fulfilling lives.

We are pleased that in 2019, the Maryland General Assembly established the Prescription Drug Affordability Board, the first such entity in the country, with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive prescription drugs purchased by state and local governments. We are very grateful for their efforts.

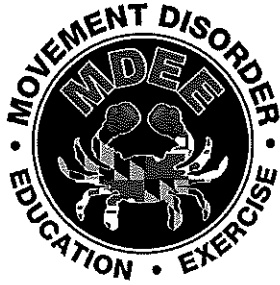
Yet there is more work to be done in this area. Many state residents, include members of our congregations, are still affected by the high cost of prescription drugs. We do not believe it is just that people are forced to make difficult choices between their health care and other essential living expenses because of cost. We urge that the Maryland General Assembly in 2024 move to expand the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board so that upper payment limits can be established, making the high cost of drug s available for all Marylanders. This is a matter of economic justice and equity, and we hope that we can count on your support.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue, and for your dedicated service to the people of Maryland.

A Luta Continua,

*Carl O. Snowden*

Honorable Carl O. Snowden  
Convener, Caucus of African American Leaders  
Maryland Civil Rights Activist  
Former Civil Rights Director, Office of the Attorney General of Maryland  
Author



Movement Disorder Education and Exercise  
309A Lots Rd.  
Stevensville, Md 21666

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
H-107, State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House  
H-101 State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

January 4, 2024

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones,

I am writing on behalf of the thousands of Marylanders and their families who are grappling with the escalating costs of prescription drugs, particularly those essential for managing movement disorders. The financial strain is forcing many to make agonizing choices between vital medications for conditions like Parkinson's disease or essential living expenses such as rent and food.

In 2019, the Maryland General Assembly took a commendable step by establishing the Prescription Drug Affordability Board, providing the authority to set upper payment limits on costly prescription drugs for state and local governments. We acknowledge and applaud the efforts of the Board and the Stakeholders Council.

As the Board works towards setting upper payment limits on expensive prescriptions for all Marylanders, we support an expansion of the Board's authority to include setting limits on expensive prescriptions for all Marylanders. This legislation is of utmost importance to our members who have movement disorders, as well as those facing challenges associated with mental health and aging. Recent survey research indicates overwhelming support from Maryland voters for such an expansion, intensifying the urgency of addressing this matter, particularly for socioeconomically unserved and underserved populations.

The need for affordable prescription drugs for movement disorders is critical, and we urge your support in enacting legislation that addresses this pressing issue. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to working together to make prescription drug affordability a reality for those affected by movement disorders in our state.

Sincerely,

*Larry Zarzecki*

Larry Zarzecki, Founder of Movement Disorder Education and Exercise



**Post Office Box 3527  
Laurel, Maryland 20709**

<b>DR. GARY ROUNDTREE</b> PRESIDENT	<b>EDWARD HOLLAND</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> VICE PRESIDENT LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR	<b>EDWARD REED</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> VICE PRESIDENT MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR	<b>MELODY KEBE</b> SECRETARY	<b>VACANT</b> TREASURER
<b>VIRGINIA BENDER</b> ASST. SECRETARY	<b>PATRICIA BELL</b> ASST. TREASURER	<b>LARRY WALTON</b> REGION II VP		

December 8, 2023

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
H-107, State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House  
H-101, State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson and Speaker Jones:

We write today to request your support for legislation to expand the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB) to set limits on the expensive prescriptions purchased by all Maryland residents.

The Maryland Federation of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) represents approximately 300,000 Federal employees and annuitants living in Maryland. Maryland NARFE is a strong supporter of the PDAB and testified in the 2023 session for the additional legislation this year that reaffirms the board's authority to issue upper payment limits and extends deadlines from the earlier law.

The PDAB's current authority covers only prescription drugs under state and local government health care plans, for those covered state and local government workers. State health care advocates, such as Maryland AARP and the Health Care for All Coalition, want to expand the board's authority in 2024 so that all Marylanders can see more affordable prescription drug costs.

Such authority will address the high price of prescription drugs faced by many Maryland families. As our partners at Maryland AARP have noted, many Maryland residents must choose between paying for their diabetes injections, heart medication, anti-cholesterol regimes, or other prescriptions or, instead, to buy food or make their rent payment. Too often, important medications are left at the pharmacist's cash register because customers can't afford them.

With the PDAB now working to apply upper payment limits to the most expensive prescription drugs, we support concurrent efforts to expand its authority to set those limits on the expensive prescriptions purchased by all in Maryland. We will work in the 2024 Session with our partners at MD AARP and the Health Care for All coalition to enact such legislation.

Thank you for your support for this important matter. We look forward to working with you in the 2024 Legislative Session. If you have any questions, you can contact Edward Holland, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President and Legislative Director of the Federation at (301) 848-3476, or [hollandnmd@aol.com](mailto:hollandnmd@aol.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Gary Roundtree, Sr. PhD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "G".

Dr. Gary Roundtree Sr. p.p.  
President, NARFE MD

BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON CONFERENCE



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*Bishop LaTrelle Easterling*

BISHOP, PENINSULA-DELAWARE CONFERENCE,  
BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

REV. ANTOINE C. LOVE *Assistant to the Bishop*

REV. ERICA ROBINSON-JOHNSON *Chief Administrative Officer*

December 6, 2023

*The Honorable Wes Moore*  
*Governor of Maryland*  
*State House*  
*100 State Circle*  
*Annapolis, MD 21401*

*The Honorable Bill Ferguson*  
*President of the Senate*  
*H-107 State House*  
*100 State Circle*  
*Annapolis, MD 21401*

*The Honorable Adrienne Jones*  
*Speaker of the House*  
*H-101, State House*  
*100 State Circle*  
*Annapolis, MD 21401*

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

As the bishop of the Baltimore-Washington and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences, I am writing on behalf of members in 1,000 United Methodist churches who are deeply concerned about the high cost of prescription drugs. As leaders in our state, you have repeatedly demonstrated your compassion and belief that health care should be available to all. I am writing to ask for your assistance.

As people of faith, we are committed to ensuring that health care is provided for everyone, without regard to status or ability to pay. We trace this belief to the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-35, where we are called to care for our neighbor. As citizens, the United Methodists view health care as a basic human right.

We recognize your commitment to these same principles and applaud the establishment of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board, which has proven to be a resounding success. In the upcoming legislative session, we ask that you use your influence to pass a bill that will give full authority to the Board, allowing them to use upper payment limits and make high-cost drugs more affordable for all Marylanders. As proponents of this measure often say, "drugs won't work if people can't afford them."

I thank you in advance for your support in this matter, and for all you do. Please know that you are in my prayers – in this holy season – and into the new year. Many challenges await, but I am confident you will meet them with wisdom, political acumen, and a generous spirit.

Blessings and Peace,

  
LaTrelle M. Easterling