



TESTIMONY FOR HB0340
The Lowering Prescription Drug Costs for All Marylanders Now Act

Bill Sponsor: Delegates Cullison and White Holland
Committee: Health and Government Operations
Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition
Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair
Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0340 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

The cost of prescription drugs for the citizens of Maryland is so completely out of control. Our members were happy to see Maryland create a first in the nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board. It was a bold step forward to stabilize prescription drug costs and keep the drug companies and insurance companies from gouging families across the state as they struggle to afford medications that they rely on to stay healthy and productive.

It has been several years since the Board was established, but due to the shortsightedness of the previous Governor, it had been languishing without full funding and without a complete roster of board members. Last year, those problems were corrected.

Now we need legislation to expand the authority of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board. HB0340 would allow the five-member board to use upper payment limits to make high-cost medications more affordable for all Marylanders — not just those who work for state and local governments.

Marylanders have no use for drugs that are too expensive. Almost all of our Coalition members struggle with high drug prices. They can't afford the copays. They can't afford to take medications that they need because those medications are priced out of reach. We want to see the Board fulfill its promise to all Marylanders and we need the legislature to expand their mandate.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.