

STATEMENT OF Kristen Ayres
who resides at 9802 Pebble Beach Court, Ijamsville, Maryland 21754
before the
Maryland Health and Government Operations Committee
February 22, 2024
Position: Favorable HB 939

Members of Maryland Health and Government Committee:

I am the parent of two children with severe and life threatening food allergies. I support House Bill 939. Insurers, nonprofit health service plans and health maintenance organizations should be required to limit the amount a covered individual is required to pay in copayments, coinsurance, and deductibles for a covered prescription epinephrine injector to not more than \$60.00. The out-of-pocket costs of epinephrine injectors is a financial burden for families who have one or more children with food allergy disease. Families must purchase a set of epinephrine injectors for each child and often additional injectors for day care, school, camp, grandparents and other family members who provide regular care. Since an accidental exposure can happen anywhere and anytime, safety precautions including maintaining injectors in a single place continuously within the home or a facility are necessary. An injector that is moved to support an activity raises the likelihood that it will be difficult to locate at a critical moment when seconds matter. The cost of additional injectors add to the overall cost. Additional costs arrive when injectors are sold with an expiration date of less than 12 months requiring replacement more frequently. In addition, when children misplace their injector, a new one must be purchased. Parents concerned about their safety will take necessary measures to ensure their family, friends, camp counselors, and other adults monitoring their child have an extra set of injectors in the event of an emergency. The cost of these necessary emergency preparedness purchases is high. We have paid over \$100 for a set of epinephrine injectors. In a given year, we may purchase as many as 4 sets for each child. Budgeting for this expense is difficult. The out-of-pocket cost often fluctuates as does the availability of injectors with a full twelve month expiration. These fluctuations and the unpredictability of situations requiring a new set makes it difficult to maintain a budget and bare the expense. Capping the price would help parents who are already financially burdened maintaining high-priced special diets not covered by insurance as well as expensive accommodations such as kitchenettes when traveling afford essential emergency care epinephrine injectors.

House Bill 939 ensures every family has the epinephrine injectors they need eliminating high prices as a barrier to safety.