



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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**Senate Bill 357 – Prescription Drug Affordability Board - Authority for Upper Payment Limits
(Lowering Prescription Drug Costs for All Marylanders Now Act)
Finance Committee – February 6, 2025
SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2025 legislative session. WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of **SB 357**, a bill that expands the authority of Maryland's Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB) to set upper payment limits for high-cost drugs purchased by all Marylanders.

The skyrocketing cost of prescription drugs hurts all Marylanders. Older adults, who are more likely to have chronic conditions requiring prescription drug treatment and be on fixed incomes, suffer disproportionately. A [January 2024 report by AARP Public Policy Institute](#) found that the average price increases for prescription drugs widely used by older Americans, including Medicare beneficiaries, outstripped the price increases for other consumer goods and services between 2006 and 2020. In 2020, the average annual cost for widely used prescription drugs used to treat chronic conditions was more than \$26,000 per drug per year. This cost was more than 40 percent higher than the average Social Security retirement benefit (\$18,034), nearly 90 percent of the median income for Medicare beneficiaries (\$29,650), and more than one-third of the median US household income (\$69,639).

Due to continued gender pay gaps, women also find it harder to afford prescription drugs they need. Polling routinely shows women are more likely than men to skip or ration their medication, causing poor health outcomes, according to the [Maryland Health Care for All! Coalition](#).

These skyrocketing costs place considerable burdens on our families and neighbors. [Unfortunately, the problem is getting worse, with drug corporations increasing prices for some drugs by more than five times the inflation rate as recently as July 2023.](#) As these costs continue to soar, many Marylanders, especially older adults and women, will continue to face difficult decisions between paying for much-needed lifesaving medications and other necessities such as food, heat and housing.

We ask for your support for SB 357 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Tazeen Ahmad
WDC President

Diana Rubin
WDC Aging Subcommittee

JoAnne Koravos
WDC Advocacy Co-Chair