



Mission: *To improve public health in Maryland through education and advocacy* **Vision:** *Healthy Marylanders living in Healthy Communities*

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 424
Prescription Drug Affordability Board - Authority for Upper
Payment Limits
(Lowering Prescription Drug Costs for All Marylanders Now Act)
Before the House Health and Government Operations Committee
By: Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA)
February 6, 2024**

Chair Peña-Melnyk, Vice-Chair Cullison, and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in favor of HB 424, which would give the Prescription Drug Affordability Board the authority to set upper payment limits to make high-cost drugs more affordable for ALL Marylanders. Special thank you to Vice Chair Cullison and Delegate White Holland for sponsoring this life-saving legislation.

It is a major public health issue when patients cannot afford their medications. Recent polling shows as many as 45% of Marylanders report struggling to afford the medicines they need, with one third of Marylanders skipping a dose or rationing medication due to cost. At the same time, skyrocketing drug costs are contributing to all of our health insurance premiums, making quality coverage less affordable for our residents. Meanwhile, prescription drug corporations use far more resources on self-enrichment and advertising than they do on research and development. Marylanders should not have to choose between their prescription drugs and other necessities like housing or food. The Prescription Drug Affordability Board has been making great progress in making high-cost drugs more affordable for state and local governments, and is ready to use expanded authority to make high-cost prescription drugs more affordable for ALL Marylanders. Marylanders have been waiting since 2019 for the Board to receive this authority, and with the cost of prescription drugs and other daily necessities rising every day, they should not have to wait any longer.

We strongly urge you to give a favorable report to HB 424.

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 443.475.0242**