

March 4, 2026

The Honorable Heather Bagnall, Chair
House Health Committee
Lowe House of Delegates Building
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

AstraZeneca
1 Medimmune Way,
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
astrazeneca.com

RE: HB 1135 Health Occupations - Pharmacists - Vaccination Orders

Chairman Bagnall and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of AstraZeneca, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 1135. AstraZeneca is a global, science-led biopharmaceutical company that focuses on the discovery, development, and commercialization of prescription medicines in Oncology, Rare Diseases, and BioPharmaceuticals, including Cardiovascular, Renal & Metabolism, Respiratory & Immunology, and Vaccines and Immune Therapies. Maryland is home to our largest U.S. footprint, including advanced manufacturing and R&D operations. We employ over 5,500 Marylanders across sites in Gaithersburg, Frederick and Rockville.

AstraZeneca appreciates the opportunity to share its perspective in support of legislation intended to broaden access to vaccines by updating Maryland law to reflect modern, FDA-approved vaccine delivery approaches. Ensuring that residents can receive timely access to vaccines remains a shared public health priority, particularly as the delivery of care continues to evolve beyond traditional clinical settings.

Vaccination access is strongest when patients are offered multiple, complementary pathways to care. Pharmacies have long served as trusted, community-based access points for preventive health services, and pharmacists play an increasingly important role in helping patients navigate vaccination options. As new forms of vaccines become available, including options approved for self-administration, it is important that state law clearly enables pharmacists to participate in those models in a way that is consistent with their training and professional responsibilities.

Current statutory language does not fully reflect this evolution. In particular, it does not clearly account for circumstances in which a vaccine is approved for home delivery and self-administration. Under these conditions, the pharmacist's role is focused on clinical review, prescribing, dispensing, and patient education rather than solely vaccine administration. Clarifying this authority removes an unintended barrier that can limit access for individuals who may otherwise benefit from additional vaccination access options.

Decreasing barriers and expanding access in this way supports public health goals without disrupting existing care models. Individuals will continue to have the option to receive vaccines through physicians' offices, clinics, and in-pharmacy administration. Providing an additional pathway simply increases flexibility for patients and caregivers who may face scheduling, transportation, or other access challenges.

Safety and oversight remain central to this approach. Vaccines approved for self-administration are supported by established prescribing information, defined eligibility criteria, and standard adverse-event reporting requirements. Pharmacists operate within well-regulated professional frameworks and are accustomed to managing prescription therapies that require careful screening, counseling, follow-up and Immunet reporting.

Across the country, states are increasingly updating their laws to ensure that vaccination policy keeps pace with federally approved innovations and contemporary pharmacy practice. These efforts reflect recognition that improving access does not require lowering standards, but rather ensures that statutory frameworks are sufficiently clear and adaptable.



AstraZeneca believes this legislation represents a pragmatic step toward strengthening public health prevention efforts in Maryland. By clarifying pharmacist authority in a limited and thoughtful manner, the state can support broader vaccine access, preserve patient choice, and reinforce the role of pharmacists as accessible health care providers within their communities. For these reasons, AstraZeneca respectfully supports a favorable report.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to provide feedback on this important legislation. We urge a favorable report on HB 1135.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Geoffrey A. Gallo".

Geoffrey A. Gallo
Head of Corporate & State Government Affairs
AstraZeneca
geoffrey.gallo@astrazeneca.com
Mobile: (603) 770-9000