



Date: February 25, 2026
To: The Honorable Heather Bagnall, Chair, House Health Committee
From: Aliyah N. Horton, FASAE, CAE, Executive Director, 240-688-7808
Cc: Members, Health Committee
Re: **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT– HB 838 State Board of Pharmacy Prescriber-Pharmacist Agreements**

The Maryland Pharmacists Association (MPhA) and the Maryland Pharmacy Coalition (MPC) recommend a **FAVORABLE report on HB 838 State Board of Pharmacy Prescriber-Pharmacists Agreements**. The bill creates a meaningful opportunity for pharmacists to expand access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorder (OUD) — a critical step in addressing Maryland’s overdose crisis.

Many communities—especially rural and underserved areas—lack sufficient MAT prescribers. This bill enables pharmacist participation to expand the OUD treatment workforce. Other thoughts of note:

- Pharmacists already dispense buprenorphine and other OUD medications.
- Pharmacist-initiated, adjusted, and monitored therapy, under physician protocol, improves continuity, allows for faster treatment access and more timely dose adjustments.
- Frequent patient contact with pharmacists allows for:
 - early identification of adherence or relapse issues.
 - supportive transitions from emergency departments or hospitals to outpatient care and
 - improved access in pharmacy deserts and rural areas
- Pharmacist-based care, which can be provided in varied practice settings, can reduce stigma by integrating treatment into routine healthcare settings. This also allows for scalable MAT programs in
 - Community pharmacies
 - Health systems
 - Behavioral health clinics
 - Telehealth-supported models.

MPhA and MPC urge a FAVORABLE report on HB 838.