
By: **Delegates Boutin and Mandel**

Introduced and read first time: January 24, 2005

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Health - Legibility of Prescriptions Workgroup - Reports**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene and a
4 certain workgroup studying the legibility of prescriptions to submit an interim
5 report on or before a certain date and a final report on or before a certain date;
6 and generally relating to a study and report on the legibility of prescriptions.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
8 Chapter 503 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2004
9 Section 2

10 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
11 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

12 **Chapter 503 of the Acts of 2004**

13 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

14 (a) The Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, in conjunction with the
15 Maryland Health Care Commission, the Board of Physicians, and the Board of
16 Pharmacy, shall convene a workgroup of authorized prescribers, including physicians,
17 dentists, podiatrists, and nurses; pharmacists; hospitals; long-term care facilities;
18 and local health departments to study the issue of legibility of prescriptions and make
19 recommendations for any statutory or regulatory changes needed to improve
20 prescription legibility in order to enhance patient safety.

21 (b) The study shall include:

22 (1) The appropriate content and format of a prescription;

23 (2) The best means to inform and educate prescribers if changes in
24 prescription format or content are enacted;

25 (3) The appropriate time frame and procedures for implementation of
26 any changes enacted;

- 1 (4) Mechanisms for enforcement of any changes enacted;
- 2 (5) The impact of any changes in the content or format of prescriptions
3 on oral prescriptions;
- 4 (6) Whether pharmacists should be prohibited by statute from
5 dispensing illegible prescriptions; and
- 6 (7) The use and cost of computerized physician order entry and the
7 feasibility of eliminating handwritten prescriptions after a specified date.

8 (c) (1) The workgroup shall report its recommendations [on or before
9 November 1, 2004,] in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to
10 the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House
11 Health and Government Operations Committee.

12 (2) THE WORKGROUP SHALL SUBMIT AN INTERIM REPORT ON OR
13 BEFORE FEBRUARY 1, 2005, AND A FINAL REPORT ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 15, 2005.

14 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take
15 effect October 1, 2005.