



BERNARD C. "JACK" YOUNG  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**HB 316**

February 11, 2020

**TO:** Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee

**FROM:** Nicholas Blendy, Deputy Director of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 316 – Public Health – Schedule II Controlled Dangerous Substances – Partial Filling of Prescriptions

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 316.

Opioid overdose is a public health crisis. Nationally, Maryland ranks in the top five states for opioid-related overdose death rates.<sup>1</sup> In 2018, Maryland and Baltimore City respectively saw 379 and 128 prescription opioid-related intoxication deaths.<sup>2</sup> In 2017, Baltimore City reported the second highest age-adjusted overdose mortality rate among US counties with populations greater than 100,000.<sup>3</sup>

Over-prescription of opioids by prescribers is a significant contributor to chronic opioid dependence. A study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association Surgery* found that new chronic opioid use after surgery is one of the most common

---

<sup>1</sup> "Maryland Opioid Summary." 2019. National Institute on Drug Abuse. <https://www.drugabuse.gov/opioid-summaries-by-state/maryland-opioid-summary>

<sup>2</sup> "Unintentional drug- and alcohol-related intoxication deaths in Maryland, 2018." 2019. Maryland Department of Health. [https://bha.health.maryland.gov/Documents/Annual\\_2018\\_Drug\\_Intox\\_Report.pdf](https://bha.health.maryland.gov/Documents/Annual_2018_Drug_Intox_Report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> "Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2017." 2018. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. <https://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html>

under-recognized complications after surgery.<sup>4</sup> In another study, 42% to 71% of all opioid tablets went unused by surgical patients.<sup>5</sup>

Unused leftover prescription opioids are a grave opportunity for misuse. The 2015 National Survey on Drug Use found the majority of adults who misused opioids reported doing so without a prescription; of those, over 40% reported receiving their prescription opioids free from friends and relatives.<sup>6</sup> Despite concerted efforts to improve opioid prescriber habits through education and guidelines, overprescribing opioids remains an ongoing challenge.<sup>7</sup>

This bill offers a key opportunity to complement Maryland's and Baltimore's ongoing efforts to combat its opioid crisis. This bill will promote safe prescribing practices and reduce the amount of leftover opioid prescriptions ripe for misuse that is devastating to our communities.

We respectfully request a **favorable** report on House Bill 316.

---

<sup>4</sup> Brummet et al. "New persistent opioid use after minor and major surgical procedures in US adults." 2017 June 21. JAMA Surgery 152(6): e170504

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamasurgery/fullarticle/2618383>

<sup>5</sup> Bicket et al. "Prescription opioid analgesics commonly used after surgery: a systematic review." 2017 Nov. JAMA Surgery 152(11):1066-1071. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28768328>

<sup>6</sup> Han et al. 2017. "Prescription opioid use, misuse, and use disorders in U.S. adults: 2015 national survey on drug use and health." Annals of Internal Medicine. 167(5): 293-301. <https://annals.org/aim/article-abstract/2646632/prescription-opioid-use-misuse-use-disorders-u-s-adults-2015>

<sup>7</sup> Vu et al. "Statewide implementation of postoperative opioid prescribing guidelines." 2019. New England Journal of Medication. 381:680-682. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc1905045>