



HB14 Pharmacists – Prescription Drug and Device Labels – Expiration Dates
Health and Government Operations Committee
January 27, 2021

Position: Support

Background: HB14 would allow pharmacists to label certain prescription drugs and devices with the expiration date provided by the manufacturer.

Comments: The Maryland Association of Chain Drug Stores has requested and supports HB14, which would allow pharmacists to label prescription drugs and devices that are dispensed in the original manufacturer packaging with the expiration date provided by the manufacturer. Current Maryland law requires pharmacists to relabel prescriptions dispensed in the original packaging with a maximum one-year expiration date, regardless of the shelf life indicated by the manufacturer. This practice can cause confusion for consumers and result in usable medicines and devices being thrown away or needlessly replaced.

The current legal requirements for expiration dates have resulted in consumer protection lawsuits against pharmacies for ‘deceptive practices’, and fines levied against pharmacies that printed labels with manufacturer expiration dates in response to those legal proceedings. Allowing pharmacists to label prescription drugs with the manufacturer’s expiration date will clear up confusion for consumers and allow pharmacies to operate without fear of legal action or having to walk a fine line between consumer protection and State regulation.

Thank you for your consideration, and we urge a favorable report on HB14.