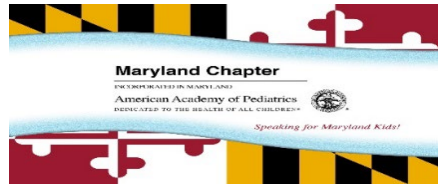




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MID-ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Malcolm Augustine

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Christine K. Krone

DATE: February 8, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 323 – *Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Prior Authorization for Drug Products to Treat an Opioid Use Disorder – Prohibition*

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society, the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers, we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 323.

Senate Bill 323 prohibits the Medical Assistance Program from requiring prior authorization for a prescription drug that is used to treat an opioid use disorder that contains methadone, buprenorphine, or naltrexone. The escalating incidence of opioid use disorders and overdoses continues to be the focus of significant policy considerations. Over the last several Sessions, a number of initiatives have been enacted with the objective of lowering incidence, saving lives, and effectively providing access to services.

Effectively providing treatment for opioid disorder often requires immediate provision of services, including essential drug products. Imposing administrative hurdles, such as prior authorization, often delay the provision of required services. Prior authorization for drugs that treat opioid use disorders, not only prevents the timely administration of life-saving medications but could result in a patient overdosing between visits while waiting for approval and/or failing to return to receive the medication once approved, thereby not receiving necessary treatments.

Senate Bill 323 only applies to prescription drugs that are solely used to treat opioid use disorders and therefore there is no basis for requiring prior authorization. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

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