



To: House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill: Senate Bill 355 – HIV Prevention Drugs - Prescribing and Dispensing by Pharmacists and Insurance Requirements

Date: March 27, 2022

Position: Support

The Maryland Nurses Association (MNA) supports *Senate Bill 355 – HIV Prevention Drugs – Prescribing and Dispensing by Pharmacists and Insurance Requirements*. The bill permits pharmacists to dispense post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to prevent HIV in certain circumstances and improves insurance coverage for PEP and PrEP.

MNA supports this legislation because there is a compelling public health need to increase access to PEP and PrEP. This bill increases access to this life saving medication by using pharmacists to “quick start” the drug regimen and then transition care to primary care providers so that it can be managed by a patient’s health care provider. The bill has well-developed safeguards to ensure that pharmacists are only dispensing these medications in the most clinically appropriate situations.

MNA also strongly supports the insurance provisions of this bill. Under federal law, insurance companies are required to cover PrEP without cost share. However, there is a lack of clarity over whether insurance companies have to cover the PrEP related ancillary services without cost sharing. If a patient is unable to access these ancillary services they are not going to be able to be prescribed PrEP.

We ask for a favorable report on this legislation. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at (443) 350-1325 or stiffin@policypartners.net.