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**Senate Bill 64 – HIV Prevention Drugs – Prescribing and
Dispensing by Pharmacists and Insurance Requirements**

UNFAVORABLE

Senate Finance Committee

January 31, 2023

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 64 – HIV Prevention Drugs – Prescribing and Dispensing by Pharmacists and Insurance Requirements.

The Maryland Managed Care Organization Association (MMCOA), which is comprised of all nine MCOs that serve Medicaid, is committed to ensuring access to the prescription drugs and devices that our members depend on for their health. Maryland’s nine MCOs serve over 1.5 million Marylanders through the Medicaid HealthChoice program.

MMCOA supports efforts to improve member access to quality affordable and appropriate care in the HealthChoice program. Unfortunately this bill will likely increase the use of more costly and less appropriate drugs, resulting in poorer outcomes and increased costs. PrEP is not recommended for all patients, regardless of risk of acquiring HIV. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that clinicians offer PrEP with effective antiretroviral therapy to persons who are at high risk of HIV acquisition, which is outlined in recent guidance¹. This legislation includes no guardrails to ensure that the appropriate population receive this medication, which is important, given the medication’s high cost.

The legislation also presents clinical concerns for our members by eliminating the provider/patient education and evaluation component that is critical, based on the patient’s medical history and current needs. We do not support elimination of prior authorization and step therapy for PrEP. Furthermore, we encourage more communication on generic equivalency as part of the testing for HepC and HIV.

Finally, it is important to note that Maryland Medicaid already pays for PrEP. Coverage for PrEP was carved into coverage through the HealthChoice program on January 1, 2020. Therefore, there is no need to amend section 15-103 of the Health – General Article to mandate coverage.

For these reasons, we respectfully oppose Senate Bill 64. MMCOA looks forward to continued collaboration with the State as we work to identify ways to improve access to affordable high-quality care for all Medicaid participants.

Please contact Jennifer Briemann, Executive Director of MMCOA, with any questions regarding this testimony at jbriemann@marylandmco.org.

¹ <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/prevention-of-human-immunodeficiency-virus-hiv-infection-pre-exposure-prophylaxis#bootstrap-panel--6>