



Testimony offered on behalf of:
EPIC PHARMACIES, INC.

IN OPOSITION OF:
SB 161 – State Board of Physicians – Dispensing Permits

Hearing 2/07/23 at 1:00PM

EPIC Pharmacies Opposes HB 161, State Board of Physicians – Dispensing Permits.

It is an unfortunate truth that the over prescribing of controlled substances in MD and across the country has helped fuel an opioid epidemic. While we disagree with the provisions that allow physicians to dispense these medications because of a perceived convenience rather than a specific need, we have come to accept that in some circumstances there is benefit to patients through the use of physician dispensing permits. By far, the vast majority of these practitioners are doing this for the right reasons. With that said, pharmacists have long questioned those clinics whose business model focuses on the treatment of patients almost exclusively with controlled substances and then also dispenses those drugs to their patients without any pharmacy safeguards to increase the safety of this process. This model specifically, is why we oppose any legislation that removes the oversight of the Office of Controlled Substance Administration (OCSA).

As a pharmacy owner who is routinely inspected by the OCSA, I can understand why physicians would like to eliminate this oversight. My staff and I know that these are difficult and invasive inspections and that they always seem to come at the most inopportune time. While their visits challenge our workflow, this office is full of experienced professionals whose independent oversight of pharmacy and physician dispensing most certainly results in a safer process for patients who need these medications. The fact that they are thorough and independent of any of the professional boards means that they are able to hold these practices to the high standards that these drugs demand. Under the current regulations, OCSA is impartial and unable to be bent to the influence of practitioners serving on their respective boards who may want to simply make the process easier and less restrictive. For the safety of our patients and your constituents serviced by physician dispensers, we strongly oppose any legislation that would lessen the authority of the OCSA in Maryland. Please vote unfavorably on HB161.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian M. Hose".

Brian M. Hose, PharmD
Chair, EPIC PharmPAC of MD
Owner, Sharpsburg Pharmacy