



TESTIMONY FOR HB0279
Prescription Drug Affordability Board - Upper Payment Limits

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Cullison

Committee: Health and Government Operations

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0279 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

The cost of prescription drugs for the citizens of Maryland is so completely out of control. Our members were happy to see Maryland create a first in the nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board. It was a bold step forward to stabilize prescription drug costs and keep the drug companies and insurance companies from gouging families across the state as they struggle to afford medications that they rely on to stay healthy and productive. It has been several years since the Board was established, but due to the shortsightedness of the previous Governor, it has been languishing without full funding and without a complete roster of board members. We need the Board to develop a plan for setting upper payment limits on prescription drugs as soon as possible.

Marylanders have no use for drugs that are too expensive. Almost all of our Coalition members struggle with high drug prices. They can't afford the copays. They can't afford to take medications that they need because those medications are priced out of reach.

We want to see the Board fulfill its promise to all Marylanders and we need the legislature to reaffirm their mandate and ensure that they are fully funded and galvanized to reduce prescription drug prices in Maryland. We can't wait any longer to solve this problem.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.