



## MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF CHAIN DRUG STORES

**SB 372/HB 1232 Health Occupations - Pharmacists - Administration of Vaccines**  
**Position: Support**  
**March 15, 2023**

*Unfortunately, patients' access to vaccines and testing services in their community will be greatly reduced after May 11, when the federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) Declarations under the PREP Act expire and Maryland temporary authority expires June 1.* However, the good news is that the Maryland General Assembly has a chance to prevent the rollback from effecting Marylanders' access to healthcare by adopting SB 372/HB 1232. These bills would permanently provide families and patients with the option of obtaining necessary vaccine services at pharmacies.

**Over the last three years, Maryland's families have received more than three and a half million vaccines at their local community pharmacies.** This clearly demonstrates that patients trust pharmacies to care for children and adults, that families enjoy having the option to obtain immunizations there, and that pharmacists have the expertise necessary to continue to offer these services. Moreover, community pharmacies have successfully expanded healthcare access and equity in both rural and urban communities that have been traditionally underserved.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the challenges within the traditional healthcare system, but it also proved that pharmacies could provide Marylanders with patient-driven access to care that is safe and convenient. To keep up with patient demand during the pandemic, Maryland pharmacies quickly pivoted and set up new infrastructure and equipment needed in every community to perform mass COVID immunizations and testing, as well as the full range of childhood vaccines.

SB 372/HB 1232 aligns with the overwhelming public support for pharmacists providing vaccines. In a survey commissioned by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores and conducted by Morning Consult December 7-12, 2022, **85% of Marylanders support pharmacists administering routine vaccinations**. Additionally, the bills maintain the need for parental consent, simply providing families in Maryland with another option when they are deciding how to meet their healthcare requirements according to their own schedules and needs.

We are extremely grateful for your thoughtful leadership and continued dedication to patient healthcare access issues. Please support and take steps to advance SB 372/HB 1232. These bills will protect your constituents' option to receive immunizations at their local pharmacy, while maintaining expanded healthcare access, providing referrals to primary care physicians for wellness visits, and promoting equity in all Maryland communities.