



**2024 SESSION
POSITION PAPER**

BILL: **SB 944 – Nonprescription Drugs and Devices – Provision by Registered Nurses and Sale of Contraceptives Through Automatic Devices**

COMMITTEE: **Senate Finance Committee**

POSITION: **Letter of Support With Amendments**

BILL ANALYSIS: **SB 944 would repeal the prohibition on the sale of certain contraceptives by means of vending machines or other automatic device; authorize registered nurses to provide, without a prescription, nonprescription drugs, and devices in a local health department under certain circumstances.**

POSITION RATIONALE: The Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO) submits this **Letter of Support With Amendments** regarding SB 944. In general, MACHO supports the intent of the bill to broaden the availability of nonprescription contraceptives by enabling registered nurses employed by local health departments (LHDs) to distribute contraceptive devices without the additional step of a prescription or physician oversight. This change will improve access to contraceptive devices such as latex condoms, help to streamline efforts in LHDs and save valuable staff time as physicians will no longer have to write standing orders or prescriptions related to this service and allow clinical staff to focus on other priorities. The repeal of the prohibition on the sale of nonprescription contraceptives, such as latex condoms, via vending machine, will also help to improve access to contraception and be an important method of preventing transmission of sexually transmitted infections.

However, the elements of the bill authorizing registered nurses to provide, without a prescription, nonprescription drugs raise some concerns about oversight and workflows, absent language clarifying the circumstances and specific types of medications this legislation would authorize. There may be instances where the use of certain nonprescription medications would be inadvisable for patients with particular medical conditions or histories. The addition of clarifying language to include specific types of nonprescription medication would alleviate these concerns. In the absence of that language and in the interest of improving access to nonprescription contraceptive devices, MACHO recommends the following amendments:

On Page 4, Line 14, delete DRUGS AND

On Page 4, Line 22, delete DRUGS AND

For these reasons, the Maryland Association of County Health Officers submits this Letter of Support with Amendments for SB 944. For more information, please contact Ruth Maiorana, MACHO Executive Director at rmaiora1@jhu.edu or 410-937-1433. *This communication reflects the position of MACHO.*
