

Respected members of the committee,

My name is Sherine Joseph, testifying on behalf of the Independent Pharmacies of Maryland. I'm in support of SB 626. There are many aspects of this bill but I'm going to talk about the gag clause provision of this bill. Through this bill I'm asking for the right to speak the truth to my customers. To tell them the truth that we are unable to fill majority of their brand name medications not because we cannot carry it but because the PBM who manages their prescription benefit, the PBM who does not buy, stock, dispense or counsel about their prescriptions chooses to pay the pharmacy way below cost on these medications and we are yet to learn the magic of doing business in the negatives. They then steer these prescriptions to their affiliate chain pharmacies, where my

customers have to wait days and weeks and sometimes end up discontinuing the medication which makes them end up in the ER. With the recent death of a fellow pharmacist at such a chain and the recent fines being imposed on these chains for being understaffed, the picture is clear that all the PBM's care about is their bottom line and the satisfaction of their stock holders and not the well being of your constituents. The health of your constituents is literally in your hands and I pray that you will uphold that above the PBM greed and vote in favor of this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.