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BILL: House Bill 127 - Public Health - Nonoccupational Postexposure Prophylaxis (nPEP) Standing Order Program - Establishment

DATE: January 31, 2024

POSITION: FAVORABLE

COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations

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Annapolis Pride's mission is to advocate for, empower, and celebrate the LGBTQ+ community in Anne Arundel County to live fully and authentically. Our vision is a safe, equitable, and anti-racist community where people of all identities thrive.

As such, Annapolis Pride supports House Bill 127, which is a crucial step towards strengthening public health efforts in Maryland. While PEP significantly decreases the risk of contracting HIV if administered within 72 hours - with the greatest efficacy within the first few hours - access barriers and long emergency room wait times hinder timely administration.¹

Additionally, the nPEP Standing Order Program authorizing pharmacists and healthcare providers to dispense PEP without requiring a prescription. This legislation makes this life saving medication available in more convenient locations, such as pharmacies and community health centers. This will significantly reduce wait times and make PEP accessible to individuals who might otherwise struggle to reach a medical provider withing the crucial 72-hour window.

Accordingly, Annapolis Pride respectfully requests a **favorable** committee report on House Bill 127.

¹ DeHaan E, McGowan JP, Fine SM, et al. PEP to Prevent HIV Infection [Internet]. Baltimore (MD): Johns Hopkins University; 2022 Aug 11. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK562734/>