



**Date:** February 27, 2024

**To:** The Honorable Jocelyn Pena-Melnyk, Chair

**From:** Aliyah N. Horton, FASAE, CAE, Executive Director, MPhA, 240-688-7808

**Cc:** Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee

**Re: FAVORABLE HB 1368 - Health Insurance Carriers and Pharmacy Benefit Managers-Clinician Administered Drugs.**

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The Maryland Pharmacists Association (MPhA) urges a favorable report for **HB 1368 - Health Insurance Carriers and Pharmacy Benefit Managers-Clinician Administered Drugs.**

The bill supports the prohibition of payer-mandated white bagging across the state of Maryland **in all care settings.**

**What is White Bagging?** The term describes the distribution of a patient-specific medication from a pharmacy to the physician's office, hospital, or clinic for administration. It is often used in facilitation of oncology treatments and other immunotherapy treatments for immunodeficiencies, hypersensitivity reactions, autoimmune diseases, tissue and organ transplantations, malignancies and inflammatory disorders.

Passage of the bill would prohibit a payer-mandated model where payers dictate where the patient's medication is supplied from and removes incentives for payers to steer patients to affiliated pharmacies in order to, we believe, capture a higher portion of payment for medical services.

MPhA is also concerned about "white bagging" practices due to:

- Drug integrity concerns (e.g., drug storage, temperature controls); and
- Poor communication and coordination among providers, resulting in treatment delays.

In some clinic-based practices, pharmacies are often directly down the hall from a physician or clinician who will be administering the medications. Under white bagging policies they have an extra level of coordination with the patient on treatment scheduling, patient availability, and medication delivery when they could more easily coordinate care with pharmacists/pharmacies, with whom they have a practicing relationship.

This legislation is also supported by the Maryland Pharmacy Coalition, of which MPhA is a member.