TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 393
Before the Senate Finance Committee
Maryland Citizens Health Initiative
February 5, 2025

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee;

Prescription drug affordability has been a primary focus of our organization as we seek to fulfill our mission of ensuring that all Marylanders have access to quality affordable health care. Prescription drug prices—largely for brand-name and specialty drugs—serve as a barrier to patient access, drive up insurance premiums, and strain government budgets. Luckily, biosimilar drugs (medicines very close in chemical structure to the biologic brand name product) and generic medications are very often less expensive than the original prescription drug products, increasing access and capping health spending.

Senate Bill 393 aims to expand access to these products and to improve patient awareness of drug coverage on formularies. Currently, biosimilars make up approximately 23% of the biologics market, with this number likely remaining this low due to originator's contracts with insurers and differences in biosimilar formulations.[i] While generic drugs already represent approximately 84% of prescription volume in the US, expanding access will likely lead to further reduction of spending.[ii] When the generic market is functioning as intended, generic competition works very well to reduce spending, which in turn helps patient access.

We respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 393 to further improve Marylanders' access to affordable prescription drugs.

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[i] https://www.centerforbiosimilars.com/view/biosimilars-account-for-23-market-share-with-wide-uptake-disparities-across-molecules

[ii] https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/prescription-drugs-other-medical-products/prescription-drugs-0/incentivizing-generic-biosimilar-product-uptake#:~:text=About%2084%25%20of%20all%20prescription,35%25%20in%20other%20OECD%20nations.