

**Baptist Ministers' Night Conference of
Baltimore and Vicinity (BMNCBV)**
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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 357 BEFORE THE
SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**BY REV. DR. SANDRA CONNER, PRESIDENT, BMNCBV
FEBRUARY 6, 2025**

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in favor of Senate Bill 357. The Baptist Ministers' Night Conference of Baltimore and Vicinity is an organization that strives to equip both community and faith leaders with resources to do effective health ministries for the members they serve. Our affiliations, including membership are greater than 200 organizations, consisting of faith and community-based organizations, healthcare providers, civic and government entities, businesses, etc., (this number does not include individual organization membership (constituent) totals).

As faith leaders and laypersons, we hear stories about the challenges our congregants face having to make a decision on which bills they will pay and/or whether to forgo taking their medicine due to the high cost of prescription drugs. We appreciate the fact that in 2019 the Maryland General Assembly established the first in the nation Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB) with the authority to set upper payment limits on the most expensive drugs purchased by local and state governments. The Prescription Drug Affordability Board has been making great progress, and is now ready to use expanded authority to make high-cost prescription drugs more affordable for ALL Marylanders. Our congregants have been waiting since 2019 for the Board to receive this authority. With the cost of prescription drugs and other daily necessities rising every day, it is urgent that the Board receive the expanded authority as soon as possible.

We thank your Committee for your leadership in creating the Prescription Drug Affordability Board, and thank Senators Gile and Feldman for sponsoring the legislation to expand its authority. We pray that our legislators will heed our call and give a favorable report for SB 357.