



TESTIMONY FOR HB0529

Health Insurance – Prescription Drug Formularies and Coverage for Generic Drugs and Biosimilars

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Taveras

Committee: Health and Government Operations

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB0529 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Prescription drug prices are outrageous and the way that insurance companies handle them is confusing and frustrating to everyone.

This bill, if enacted, would start to instill some structure out of the madness. It would require insurers to post on their website a complete, accurate formulary that is easily accessible (without requiring a login or password) and shows the tiering structure and any restrictions on the drug. If multiple drug plans are offered, separate, clearly marked formularies would be available. Within 30 days of making a change to a formulary, the carrier would update the website and clearly show the date the change was made.

Additionally, it would require carriers to immediately offer generics and biosimilars for any drug on their formulary at a reduced cost as long as the generic is approved by the FDA and has a wholesale acquisition cost that is less than the branded drug. The carrier would not be able to impose a prior authorization or step therapy requirement for the generic drug or place a restriction on the pharmacy that can supply the drug that makes access to it more difficult.

Our members say, "Hallelujah". This just makes sense.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.