

Emily Tarsell, LCPC

2314 Benson Mill Road
Sparks, Maryland 21152
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Favorable HB 996

Public Health - Phenibut Consumer Protection Act

Dear Chairwoman Pena-Melnyk and Members of the HGO Committee:

I am Emily Tarsell, a mother, licensed therapist and founder of Health Choice Maryland. The mission of our organization is to promote education for informed medical choice and health freedom. In keeping with that mission, we ask your Favorable report for HB996.

Most of us have never heard of Phenibut, a chemical that, [according to Web MD](#), is “likely unsafe.” Yet it can be purchased online without a prescription and with inadequate information about possible serious side effects “including reduced consciousness, dizziness, nausea, poor balance and fatigue. Taking large doses can cause trouble breathing, unconsciousness and death.”

Additionally, “Phenibut can cause dependence. People who use phenibut for 3 days or more and then stop taking it might experience withdrawal symptoms. These symptoms can include decreased appetite, nausea, muscle aches, fast heart rate, anxiety, agitation, trouble sleeping, seizures and delirium.”

While Phenibut is banned in the US, it is still found in some dietary supplements. Consumers should definitely be informed of the presence of Phenibut in any products as well as be informed of the possible side effects. Given the potential for serious outcomes, it should also be prohibited from use by minors.

HB 996 addresses these issues regarding labeling of Phenibut, truth in advertising, prohibition of selling to minors and penalties for violations. We urge the Committee to vote **Favorable for HB996**. Thank you.

Emily Tarsell, LCPC