



February 17, 2026

Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Comments from Patient First regarding *Senate Bill 506: Health Occupations – Pharmacists – Minor Conditions and HIV Prevention and Treatment*

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

As a Maryland physician with more than 30 years of experience in primary and urgent care, I am writing on behalf of Patient First’s physicians to express our concerns regarding Senate Bill 506.

Patient First provides primary and urgent care medical services at 25 locations in the State of Maryland. Our medical centers are open 365 days of the year on a walk-in, non-appointment basis from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. In Maryland, Patient First employs more than [100] physicians, who are board certified in family practice and internal medicine, and over [100] additional physician assistants and nurse practitioners. In 2025, we treated Maryland patients in more than 1 million visits for many of the same conditions that are addressed in SB 506. Over 20% of our visits were from Medicaid patients and the uninsured.

While we support efforts to expand access to care, SB 506 would do so in a manner that is inconsistent with existing state law governing patient care by physicians. Specifically, the bill would permit pharmacists to diagnose, determine treatment, and prescribe medications for illness including influenza, streptococcus, and COVID-19. Pharmacists have neither the training nor the facilities necessary to perform these tasks safely. While the bill suggests that such conditions are “minor [and] self-limiting,” **they are not**. Flu, strep and COVID kill many Maryland residents each year and pose acute threats to public health.

Under Maryland law, a physician may not prescribe drugs to a patient without first (i) obtaining a medical history; (ii) performing an appropriate examination; and (iii) initiating additional interventions and follow-up care, if necessary. These requirements promote the safe and effective treatment of patients by requiring basic medical examination and care as a precursor to drug therapy. Pharmacists lack both the medical training and the facilities necessary to perform or document any of these services required by law of physicians.

For the public health reasons set forth above, we strongly oppose SB 506 and request that you do the same. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Isaac Yoon, M.D.
Chief Medicaid Director
Patient First Neighborhood Medical Centers