

My name is Michael LaMarco, and I am writing on behalf of Annapolis Pride in support of HB1114.

HB1114 strengthens access to HIV prevention medications by addressing prescribing authority, dispensing practices, and insurance coverage requirements. Expanding and protecting access to preventive medications such as preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a proven, evidence based strategy to reduce new HIV transmissions and improve public health outcomes.

The need for accessible prevention is clear. Nationally, young adults aged 25–34 account for approximately 37% of new HIV diagnoses. Among women, the vast majority of new diagnoses are attributed to heterosexual transmission, underscoring that HIV prevention is not limited to any one community and requires broad, inclusive public health strategies.

In Maryland, disparities remain significant. Black Marylanders account for 65.3% of new HIV diagnoses but only 35.3% of PrEP users. Latino Marylanders account for 18.7% of new diagnoses but just 7.9% of PrEP users. These gaps demonstrate that access to prevention medication is not equitably reaching the communities most impacted.

I can also speak to this issue personally. I have experienced difficulty accessing PrEP medication myself due to barriers in the prescribing and coverage process. Navigating insurance requirements, provider access, and administrative hurdles can be discouraging and time consuming, even for someone who is informed and actively trying to protect their health. For many individuals, especially those with fewer resources or less flexible schedules, these obstacles can become insurmountable.

Prevention works, but only when it is accessible. HB1114 helps remove unnecessary barriers, expands prescribing pathways, and strengthens insurance protections so that Marylanders can access preventive care without stigma or delay.

By modernizing policies around HIV prevention drugs, Maryland can reduce disparities, improve health equity, and continue leading in evidence based public health policy.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge support of HB1114.

