



**House Health Committee
March 15, 2026**

**Senate Bill 562 - State Board of Pharmacy - Prescriber-Pharmacist
Agreements**

Support as Amended

NCADD-Maryland supports Senate Bill 562 as amended. Since its approval by the FDA in 2002, buprenorphine has been an invaluable tool in the treatment of opioid use disorders (OUD). Despite its effectiveness, access to this life-saving medication is limited. Far too few clinicians prescribe the medication, pharmacies often do not maintain sufficient stocks of the medication, and stigma persists in its uptake.

The Maryland Office of Overdose Response staffed a new Buprenorphine Access Workgroup created by legislation passed last year. While still in the midst of its work, they have clearly identified improving access through pharmacies as an area that could benefit consumers. Passing legislation to allow pharmacists to enter into prescriber-pharmacist agreements could benefit rural areas where the health care workforce shortage is acute, and could address racial disparities, as several studies show Black people receive buprenorphine treatment for OUD less frequently than White people in Maryland.

There are at least ten other states that allow these kinds of practice agreements and research is clear that this practice results in high rates of treatment retention and adherence. As Maryland continues to see a significant decline in the number of people who are dying from opioid overdoses, it is important to not let up. We urge the General Assembly to continue to add effective tools to our health care system to support access to care.

We therefore urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 562 as amended.