



March 2, 2026

Committee Delegates
Health Committee
Maryland General Assembly
House Office Building
6 Bladen St. (Room 241)
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support HB1114 to Expand Access to PrEP & PEP for Marylanders

Honorable Members of the Maryland House Health Committee,
On behalf of Equality Federation, which represents LGBTQ+ communities and communities living with and impacted by HIV, we write to urge your support of HB1114, legislation that would expand access to HIV prevention medications by authorizing pharmacists in Maryland to prescribe pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and prohibiting the use of burdensome prior authorization, step therapy, and cost sharing requirements for PrEP and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

Passage of HB1114 would represent a meaningful step forward in Maryland's efforts to prevent new HIV infections and advance health equity. An estimated 34,000 people were living with HIV in Maryland in 2023, with 726 new diagnoses reported that year. While progress has been made to improve awareness and reduce new infections, these data underscore the continued need to strengthen access to proven HIV prevention tools.

Furthermore, disparities in HIV burden remain stark. Black Marylanders comprise 29.2% of the state's population but account for more than 65% of new HIV diagnoses, demonstrating the urgent need for policies that expand equitable access to prevention services. HB1114 directly addresses structural barriers that can delay or prevent individuals from obtaining PrEP and PEP.

Allowing trained pharmacists to prescribe PrEP will help Marylanders access preventive care more quickly and conveniently. A nationwide study found that, among the commercially-insured population, patients visit their community pharmacies almost twice as often as they visit their physicians or other qualified health care professionals. For many individuals in Maryland, pharmacies may be the most accessible and trusted provider of health care and resources. By authorizing pharmacist prescribing, HB1114 would:

- Increase the number of convenient access points for a prescription for PrEP,
- Reduce treatment delays that can be associated with traditional clinical pathways, and
- Help reach individuals who may not otherwise engage in preventive care.

HB1114 also takes important steps to ensure PrEP and PEP are affordable and accessible by prohibiting prior authorization, step therapy, and cost sharing. Even when individuals are aware of PrEP, utilization management requirements and out-of-pocket costs can create administrative and affordability hurdles that complicate access to HIV prevention services – an area of care that may already carry stigma and other barriers for patients. These requirements can delay treatment initiation, disrupt continuity of care, and discourage individuals from starting or staying on preventive therapy.

Timely initiation and sustained adherence to PrEP and PEP are critical to the success of HIV prevention efforts. When taken as prescribed, PrEP reduces the risk of sexually acquired HIV by approximately 99 percent. PEP must be started within 72 hours after potential exposure to be effective. Maryland should enact policies that simplify access to these medications and eliminate unnecessary barriers, ensuring their full public health benefit and ongoing preventive care.

Maryland has demonstrated strong leadership in addressing HIV, including through its participation in the federal Ending the HIV Epidemic initiative, the state’s “No Wrong Door” approach to HIV testing and linkage to care, and sustained investments in community-based prevention and treatment infrastructure. However, uncertainty around federal HIV prevention funding threatens to slow progress toward EHE goals nationwide. In the face of cuts to federal HIV prevention programs, state-level policies that improve access to proven prevention tools become even more important. HB1114 builds on Maryland’s leadership by helping ensure more reliable access to PrEP and PEP.

We respectfully urge the Committee to support HB1114 to expand timely, affordable access to PrEP and PEP for Marylanders at risk of HIV.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to improving HIV prevention and public health outcomes in Maryland. Please do not hesitate to contact our Public Health Policy Strategist, Ari Taylor (Ari@equalityfederation.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,
Ari Taylor
Public Health Policy Strategist
Equality Federation