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The Honorable Heather Bagnall
241 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
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Testimony of Trans Maryland

IN SUPPORT OF

House Bill #1114: HIV Prevention Drugs - Prescribing, Dispensing, and Insurance Coverage

To the Chair, Vice Chair, and esteemed members of the Health Committee:

Trans Maryland is a multi-racial, multi-gender community power building organization for Maryland's trans community. In our work with and on behalf of transgender and gender-diverse Marylanders, we have seen firsthand how HIV—and the animus directed at those impacted by it—affects this community. Indeed, it was only last year that the Maryland General Assembly repealed Health-Gen. § 18-601.1, Maryland's statute that criminalized the knowing transference or attempted transference of HIV to another person.¹

In the four decades since HIV was identified as the cause of AIDS, we have seen dramatic improvements in not only treatment of HIV/AIDS, but also in prevention of transmission, with effective post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) not widely available to individuals at risk of contracting HIV. With proper use, PrEP is almost 100% effective at preventing transmission of HIV from sex. Unfortunately, it remains out of reach of far too many Marylanders who could benefit from it.

House Bill 1114 goes far to expanding access to PEP and PrEP by allowing the drugs to be prescribed under certain circumstances by pharmacists. This will greatly expand access to PEP and PrEP, especially for those in rural areas far from medical providers with expertise in HIV and AIDS treatment and prevention, as well as for Marylanders who cannot afford to pay for an unnecessary medical visit. Most importantly, though, it empowers Marylanders to make their own choices about their healthcare and to take action to protect their health and the health of their partners without unnecessary bureaucracy.

While HB1114 is likely to draw criticism from physician groups who are used to a quasi-monopoly in the ability to prescribe medications, it is crucial to note that HB1114 does not transfer prescription authority willy-nilly. Instead, the bill instructs the Board of Pharmacists to

¹ Chapter 651, House Bill 39 (2025), *available at* https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2025RS/chapters_noln/Ch_651_hb0039T.pdf.



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develop guidelines under which prescriptions are to be handled, and further requires that where the patient has a primary care physician, notice of the prescription is relayed to them. Furthermore, the bill is clear that patients may not refuse or waive counseling on the proper use of PEP or PrEP. As such, we believe that the risks of expanding prescribing power in this instance are greatly exaggerated and have been fully addressed by the legislative language.

For these reasons we urge an favorable report on House Bill 1114.