

OPPOSE SB773 / HB1135

Honorable Chair, and the members of the committee.

I'm writing to respectfully oppose SB773 / HB1135. While I understand the intent to improve vaccine access, I have real concerns about what this bill means for patient safety in Maryland.

There's also a practical reality worth naming: pharmacies are retail businesses, and vaccines are a product they sell. Anyone who has walked into a pharmacy recently knows the signage, the prompts at checkout, the staff asking if you're up to date on your shots. That's a sales environment – and it's a difficult place to have a genuine, unhurried conversation about informed consent. Pharmacists are often stretched thin and simply don't have the time to properly assess a patient's condition or answer detailed questions.

Beyond the immediate concerns, this bill sets a precedent. Once independent ordering authority is established for vaccines, it becomes a foundation for broader prescribing powers down the road. Maryland families deserve guardrails that ensure medical decisions are grounded in a real evaluation of their health history – not driven by a retail model.

Pharmacists play an important role in our healthcare system, but diagnosing and ordering vaccines has traditionally fallen within a physician's scope for good reason. This bill moves us further away from that individualized evaluation, particularly for patients with complex conditions who deserve more than a quick counter interaction before receiving a vaccine.

I urge the committee to oppose this bill.

Sincerely,
Mark Meyerovich
District 15