



March 12, 2026

The Honorable Heather Bagnall, Chair
The Honorable Bonnie Cullison, Vice Chair
House Health Committee
240 & 241 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony of Ray Baker, Maryland Director, Baltimore DC Metro Building Trades Council on
House Bill 1469 - Health Insurance – Workgroup to Study the Definition of Specialty Drug
Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and the Member of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on HB 1469. My name is Ray Baker. I am the Maryland Director of the Baltimore-DC Building Trades (BDCBT). The BDCBT's 28 affiliates represent more than 30,000 union construction workers across Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

The BDCBT supports HB 1469 with Drug an amendment to add a representative of a union payor to the working group. Union health plans and other union-affiliated payors have a distinct, real-world perspective on the cost and utilization of specialty drugs. We negotiate benefits at the bargaining table, administer plans every day, and see how changes in drug pricing and benefit design affect members' access to life-saving therapies and the long-term affordability of their coverage. Because specialty drugs are often among the highest-cost medications in a plan's formulary, even small definitional changes can shift substantial costs between plans, providers, and patients.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that HB 1469 be amended to explicitly add a representative of a union payor (such as a union health and welfare fund, multiemployer plan, or union-sponsored plan) to the workgroup membership. Including at least one union payor will help ensure that the workgroup's recommendations reflect:

- The budget impact of specialty drug costs on collectively bargained health benefits and plan solvency.
- How different specialty-drug definitions and tiering structures affect workers' and retirees' out-of-pocket obligations.
- Practical strategies to balance access to advanced therapies with sustainable premiums and contributions for employers and employees alike.

On behalf of the BDCBT and the workers, retirees, and families we serve, I respectfully urge the Committee to give HB 1469 a favorable report with an amendment to include a union payor on the workgroup.

Respectfully submitted,

Ray Baker