



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 484

Corporate Income Tax - Addition Modification - Direct-to-Consumer Pharmaceutical Advertising FAVORABLE

TO: Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Chair; Delegate Jessica Feldmark, Vice-Chair; and the members of the House Ways and Means Committee

FROM: Rev. Ken Phelps, Jr., member of the Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network (MEPPN)

DATE: February 12, 2026

The Episcopal Church teaches that access to quality and affordable health care is a basic human right and the Church supports those efforts to provide universal and equitable access for all. Our General Convention urges all Episcopalians to advocate for just and adequate health care policies and views this as a vital mission of the Church.

Polling shows as many as 45% of Marylanders report struggling to afford the medicines they need, with one third of Marylanders skipping a dose, rationing medication, or leaving a prescription unfilled due to cost. In the coming years, hundreds of thousands of Marylanders are expected to lose their coverage due to new administrative burdens and budget cuts from HR 1 and Congress's termination of enhanced advance premium tax credits.

House Bill 484 is an innovative way to address this issue, protecting consumers from the skyrocketing cost of prescription drugs while also generating revenue to help support the growing health care coverage demands of our state. This legislation mirrors federal efforts to eliminate tax deductions for direct-to-consumer advertisement by pharmaceutical manufacturers, which is expected to increase federal tax revenue by \$1.5-1.7 billion annually. If scaled down to represent similar metrics at a state level, Maryland could see tens of millions of dollars in increased revenue.

The Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network (MEPPN) is a ministry of The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, The Episcopal Diocese of Washington, and The Delaware-Maryland Synod ELCA



Delegate Ziegler’s proposed amendment would use the revenue to combat federal attacks on Marylanders’ access to health coverage and help keep people covered.

wholeheartedly support the ongoing effort to put patients over Big Pharma profits. For too long, the pharmaceutical industry has claimed they need to keep their prices high for research and development while they have spent many times more on advertising and self-enriching activities. It is time that Maryland puts an end to taxpayer sponsorship of this practice and puts our patients first.

The Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network (MEPPN) requests a FAVORABLE report