



MARYLAND CITIZENS' HEALTH INITIATIVE

Prescription Drug Affordability Initiative: Candidate Statement of Support

WHEREAS, every Marylander deserves access to the prescription drugs they need to keep them healthy and productive;

WHEREAS, skyrocketing costs are making some medicines virtually inaccessible to our families and neighbors, one in four Marylanders report having difficulty paying for their prescription drugs, and over half of Medicare beneficiaries who did not fill at least one prescription reported prohibitive costs as the reason;

WHEREAS, Marylanders are often unable to afford the best medication for their needs, and can be forced to choose between their treatment and other necessities, like rent and groceries. Some may skip doses, which can result in worse illness and even death;

WHEREAS, CareFirst has reported that prescription drug spending accounts for approximately one third of each health insurance premium dollar they spend in Maryland, which means that rising prescription drug prices raise healthcare costs for all Marylanders;

WHEREAS, the prohibitive cost of prescription drugs results in public health crises in Maryland, such as shortages of naloxone (a life-saving overdose antidote) which has experienced price increases of over 500%;

WHEREAS, Americans pay significantly more for their medications than individuals in other countries where governments directly or indirectly regulate the cost of prescription drugs;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the undersigned candidate supports creating a new Prescription Drug Affordability Board to make prescription drugs more affordable for Marylanders, building upon the state's successful tradition of health care cost scrutiny, by:

- establishing payment rates for those expensive prescription drugs that create significant affordability problems for Marylanders, to ensure cost savings for consumers; and
- examining the entire drug supply chain, including the roles of drug manufacturers and pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs).