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## **Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative Statement About Governor Hogan's Actions on Two Major Health Care Bills**

Maryland Governor Larry Hogan today vetoed a critical health care measure, [SB 669/HB 1095](#), which would establish a dedicated funding source to support the work of the Maryland Prescription Drug Affordability Board. He allowed another measure to go into effect without his signature: [SB 872/HB 959](#), which enshrines key principles of the federal Affordable Care Act into Maryland law, a major step forward for the state.

Following the governor's announcement, Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative President Vincent DeMarco released the following statement:

“We are confused that Governor Hogan would veto a critically important bill that would establish a dedicated source of revenue to fund the vital work of the Maryland Prescription Drug Affordability Board, while simultaneously arguing that state revenues need to be maximized. Passage of this bill would have returned \$750,000 to the state coffers. This revenue would be generated through a fee on pharmaceutical corporations, pharmacy benefits managers, and insurers and would allow the Board to sustain and expand its work to bring down the high cost of prescription drugs in Maryland. By vetoing this critical piece of legislation, the Governor is putting the interests of the rich pharmaceutical corporations over the concerns of Maryland patients. This is of special concern in this coronavirus time when we will need the Board more than ever to help make sure Marylanders can afford the vaccines and treatments they will need.”

“We thank House Speaker Adrienne Jones and Senate President Bill Ferguson for sponsoring the legislation and urge them to lead the effort to override the governor's veto. The new Board has a mandate to examine prescription drug costs and affordability in the state, make prescription drugs more affordable for the state and local government entities, and present a plan to the General Assembly on how to make high cost drugs more affordable for all Marylanders. Over time, this Board will play a key role in bringing down drug costs for average Marylanders, and we must establish a funding source to help this Board protect people across the state.”

“We are pleased that the General Assembly has enshrined key principles of the Affordable Care Act in Maryland law, and that that measure is becoming law without the Governor's signature,

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This measure is urgently needed as the Trump administration and others seek to overturn the ACA in court, which could lead to the loss of insurance for people in Maryland and across the country. Should the ACA be overturned in court, its consumer protections could also be lost. Now we have a law on the books in Maryland to maintain these important consumer protections, including a ban on insurers discriminating against people with pre-existing conditions. We thank the lead sponsors on this measure, Senator Brian Feldman and Delegates Shane Pendergrass and Joseline Peña-Melnyk, for their leadership.”