

MARYLAND PAIN INITIATIVE

February 15, 2006

The Maryland Pain Initiative (MPI) has reviewed a draft of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PMP) carefully. We are very pleased with the content and recommendations within the bill. It reflects the concerns and interests of the Maryland pain community.

In particular, we are pleased with:

- 1) the introductory description of the bill which places the program within the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and is explicit about supporting the lawful use of controlled substances without interfering with the legitimate professional practice and patient care;
- 2) the recommendation to establish an Advisory Board which includes two Maryland citizens recommended by the Maryland Pain Initiative who represent the perspective of pain patients;
- 3) the recommendation to provide an annual report to the governor and General Assembly which discloses the impact of the PMP on patient access to pharmaceutical care; and
- 4) the recommendation to establish a Multidisciplinary Consultation Team within the PMP to, among other things, assist federal law enforcement and others to interpret the program data for consideration of whether there is need for further investigation.

We also endorse the following amendments to the bill that have been described to us by the State's Attorney General's Office:

- adding nurse practitioner and Maryland Board of Nurses representation on the Advisory Board;
- amending Section 21-2A-104 to read as follows:

"(A) The Secretary shall appoint a multidisciplinary consultation team. (B) The multidisciplinary team membership shall reflect the diversity and balance of perspectives represented on the Advisory Board. C) The multidisciplinary consultation team shall consist of program staff, members of the Board, and any consultants that the Secretary determines will help achieve the diversity and balance of perspectives represented on the Advisory Board."

- amending Section 21-2AS-108B to add "(4) the role of monitored prescription drugs in the management of pain, including the distinction between addiction and physical dependence."

Again, we are very pleased with the bill and grateful for its thoughtful inclusion of protections for pain patients.

Sincerely,

Gail Amalia B. Katz
Board Member, Honorary Past Chair, Maryland Pain Initiative

Cc: J. Joseph Curran Jr., Maryland Attorney General
Jack Schwartz