

~~(a) The Maryland Health Care Foundation shall, in a manner consistent with this section, facilitate access to free or subsidized prescription pharmaceutical products drugs for residents of the State who are eligible for assistance in obtaining prescription pharmaceutical products drugs;~~

~~(b) The Foundation shall ensure that the access provided under subsection (a) of this section is available to residents in:~~

~~(1) Western Maryland;~~

~~(2) the Eastern Shore;~~

~~(3) the Baltimore Metropolitan area;~~

~~(4) the Maryland counties in the Washington Suburban Metropolitan area; and~~

~~(5) Southern Maryland;~~

~~(c) Subject to subsection (d) of this section, the Foundation may establish a regional office in each of the regions identified in subsection (b) of this section;~~

~~(d) The Foundation shall use the Medbank of Maryland, Inc. and the Western Maryland Prescription Program as the regional offices for the Baltimore Metropolitan area and Western Maryland, respectively;~~

~~(e) The Foundation may establish a central office in any one of the regions identified in subsection (b) of this section;~~

~~(f) The Governor shall provide funding in the annual budget in an amount:~~

~~(1) sufficient to enable the Foundation to satisfy the requirements of this section; and~~

~~(2) not less than \$12 million annually;~~

~~(g) The funding provided under subsection (f) of this section shall be appropriated directly to the Foundation; and~~

~~(h) The Foundation shall use the funding provided under subsection (f) of this section to satisfy the requirements of this section, including the establishment and maintenance of administrative infrastructure and the provision of short term medication while applications for assistance are pending.~~

~~SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:~~

~~Article Health General~~

~~15-103.~~

~~(D) AS PERMITTED BY FEDERAL LAW OR WAIVER, THE SECRETARY SHALL ADMINISTER THE MARYLAND PHARMACY DISCOUNT PROGRAM, ESTABLISHED UNDER § 15-124.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE, AS PART OF THE MARYLAND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.~~