

~~prescription pharmacy benefits are provided by Medicare under Title XVIII of the Social Security Act, the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene shall notify the Department of Legislative Services, 90 State Circle, Annapolis, Maryland 21401 not later than 90 days before prescription drug benefits are to be provided.~~

~~SECTION 2. 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shall submit to the federal Health Care Financing Administration an application for an amendment to the State's existing 1115 demonstration waiver necessary to implement the Maryland Pharmacy Discount Program established under § 15-124.1 of the Health General Article. The Department shall apply for federal matching funds subject to budget neutrality requirements under § 1115 of the Social Security Act and the availability of State funds.~~

~~SECTION 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:~~

~~(a) the State Comptroller of the Treasury, in consultation with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, shall study the feasibility of providing a tax credit for catastrophic out of pocket prescription drug expenses;~~

~~(b) the study shall include a consideration of:~~

~~(1) eligibility thresholds, including income and other status factors, for qualification for a tax credit;~~

~~(2) the nature and scope of out of pocket expenses that would be considered in calculating a tax credit;~~

~~(3) the fiscal impact, costs, and benefits of a variety of sizes of tax credits; and~~

~~(4) whether a tax credit should be refundable; and~~

~~(e) (1) the Comptroller shall report, on or before December 1, 2001, to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly on any findings and recommendations; and~~

~~(2) if a recommendation for a tax credit is made, the Comptroller shall make a recommendation on the appropriate size, nature, and scope of the tax credit.~~

~~SECTION 7. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:~~

~~(a) the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shall study the feasibility of purchasing prescription drugs through federally qualified health centers and local health departments in Maryland to maximize the number of people who can benefit from the purchasing power of these entities, especially under available federal prescription drug pricing programs; and~~

~~(b) the Department shall, on or before December 1, 2001, report to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly on:~~