

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS - LOCAL UNION No. 24

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Baltimore Port Council
Baltimore Metro Council - AFL-CIO
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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Rico Albacarys and I am writing on behalf of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 24, in Baltimore. IBEW 24 represents more than 2,800 working men and women in Maryland, with offices and training locations in Frederick, Baltimore, and Salisbury. We want to share our perspective as the PBM Workgroup begins reviewing pharmacy benefit manager practices, ERISA protections, and pharmacy reimbursement policies.

Many of our members are covered by self-funded, ERISA-based health plans. These plans are what keep working families healthy and financially stable. Without ERISA's protections, many of the benefits our members rely on would be unaffordable or unavailable.

For decades, ERISA has created a consistent and affordable system for employers and workers alike. Changes that disrupt this structure, such as restrictions on plan design, drug formularies, or cost-sharing rules, would quickly drive up costs for families. When plans lose the ability to negotiate rebates or manage prescriptions effectively, the impact is felt in higher co-pays, fewer choices, and interruptions in care.

We encourage the PBM Workgroup to listen to organized labor and plan sponsors as this process plays out. Both have first-hand knowledge of what it takes to deliver strong health coverage. We also note that the legal questions surrounding ERISA preemption remain unsettled in the courts. Until those cases are resolved, we feel it is premature to take actions that could destabilize established benefit systems.

We urge you to protect the tools that have allowed unions and employers to provide affordable, dependable health care. Maryland's working families cannot afford policies that raise costs or weaken coverage, especially now.

Sincerely,

Rico Albacarys
Political Director
IBEW Local 24