

- 1 SB93
- 2 LUDQAAA-1
- 3 By Senators Jones, Butler, Beasley, Stewart, Chesteen, Kelley,
- 4 Barfoot, Allen, Price
- 5 RFD: Banking and Insurance
- 6 First Read: 04-Feb-25



1

2

3

4 SYNOPSIS:

5 Pharmacy benefits managers are third-party 6 administrators of prescription drug benefits in a 7 health insurance plan. They are primarily responsible 8 for processing and paying prescription drug claims. 9 They typically negotiate price discounts and rebates from manufacturers and determine how pharmacies get 10 11 reimbursed for dispensing prescriptions. Under state 12 law, pharmacy benefits managers are licensed and 13 regulated by the Department of Insurance.

14 This bill would prohibit pharmacy benefits 15 managers from reimbursing a pharmacy less than the 16 actual acquisition cost paid by the pharmacy and would 17 prohibit pharmacy benefits managers from charging 18 pharmacies or pharmacists miscellaneous fees related to 19 network participation and claims processing.

20 This bill would permit pharmacists to disclose 21 information to consumers about drug prices and 22 alternative drugs for treatment.

This bill would recognize the right of a pharmacy to refuse to dispense a drug when the pharmacy would be reimbursed less than a pharmacy's dispensing cost, and would further prohibit a pharmacy benefits manager from recovering the pharmacy's dispensing cost by requiring a consumer to pay a higher deductible or

Page 1



29 copayment.

31Insurance may enforce violations of the Alabama32Pharmacy Benefits Manager Licensure and Regulation Act33committed by a pharmacy benefits manager during an34audit of a pharmacy, and may also enforce the Pharmacy35Audit Integrity Act in relation to auditing of a36pharmacy by a pharmacy benefits manager.37	30	This bill would specify that the Commissioner of
 committed by a pharmacy benefits manager during an audit of a pharmacy, and may also enforce the Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act in relation to auditing of a pharmacy by a pharmacy benefits manager. apharmacy by a pharmacy benefits manager. A BILL TO BE ENTITLED A Relating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amend Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and 27-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy benefits managers in relation to pharmacy benefits managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits for charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187, 	31	Insurance may enforce violations of the Alabama
34audit of a pharmacy, and may also enforce the Pharmacy35Audit Integrity Act in relation to auditing of a36pharmacy by a pharmacy benefits manager.373839A BILL40TO BE ENTITLED41AN ACT424343Relating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amend44Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and4527-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy46benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists;47to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits48managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits49from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists50to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add51Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide52circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to53amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975,54to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the55Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	32	Pharmacy Benefits Manager Licensure and Regulation Act
Audit Integrity Act in relation to auditing of apharmacy by a pharmacy benefits manager.pharmacy by a pharmacy benefits manager.Audit Integrity Act in relation to auditing of apharmacy by a pharmacy benefits manager.Audit Integrity Act in DE ENTITLEDAudit Integrity Act in DE ENTITLEDAudit Integrity Act in Column ActionRelating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amendSections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, andSections 27-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacybenefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists;to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefitsmanagers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managersfrom charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmaciststo disclose drug information to covered individuals; to addSection 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to providecircumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; toamend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975,to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce thePharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	33	committed by a pharmacy benefits manager during an
36 pharmacy by a pharmacy benefits manager. 37 38 39 A BILL 40 TO BE ENTITLED 41 AN ACT 42 43 Relating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amend 44 Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and 45 27-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy 46 benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists; 47 to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits 48 managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers 49 from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists 50 to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add 51 Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide 52 circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to 53 amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, 54 to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the 55 Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	34	audit of a pharmacy, and may also enforce the Pharmacy
37373839A BILL40TO BE ENTITLED41AN ACT4243Relating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amend44Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and4527-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy46benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists;47to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits48managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits49from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists50to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add51Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide52circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to53amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975,54to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the55Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	35	Audit Integrity Act in relation to auditing of a
3839A BILL40TO BE ENTITLED41AN ACT4243Relating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amend44Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and4527-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy46benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists;47to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits48managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits49from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists50to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add51Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide52circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to53amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975,54to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the55Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	36	pharmacy by a pharmacy benefits manager.
39A BILL40TO BE ENTITLED41AN ACT4243Relating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amend44Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and4527-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy46benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists;47to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits48managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers49from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists50to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add51Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide52circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to53amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975,54to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the55Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	37	
40TO BE ENTITLED41AN ACT4243Relating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amend44Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and4527-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy46benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists;47to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits48managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers49from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists;50to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add51Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide52circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to53amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975,54to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the55Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	38	
41AN ACT4243Relating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amend44Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and4527-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy46benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists;47to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits48managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers49from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists50to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add51Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide52circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to53amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975,54to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the55Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	39	A BILL
 42 43 Relating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amend 44 Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and 45 27-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy 46 benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists; 47 to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits 48 managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers 49 from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists 50 to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add 51 Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide 52 circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to 53 amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, 54 to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the 55 Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187, 	40	TO BE ENTITLED
 Relating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amend Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and 27-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists; to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187, 	41	AN ACT
Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and 27-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists; to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	42	
 27-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists; to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187, 	43	Relating to pharmacy benefits managers; to amend
benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists; to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	44	Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7, 27-45A-8, and
47 to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits 48 managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers 49 from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists 50 to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add 51 Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide 52 circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to 53 amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, 54 to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the 55 Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	45	27-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to further regulate pharmacy
48 managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers 49 from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists 50 to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add 51 Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide 52 circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to 53 amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, 54 to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the 55 Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	46	benefits managers in relation to pharmacies and pharmacists;
49 from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists 50 to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add 51 Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide 52 circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to 53 amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, 54 to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the 55 Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	47	to further regulate reimbursement by pharmacy benefits
to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	48	managers to pharmacies; to prohibit pharmacy benefits managers
51 Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide 52 circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to 53 amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, 54 to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the 55 Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	49	from charging pharmacies certain fees; to permit pharmacists
52 circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to 53 amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, 54 to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the 55 Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	50	to disclose drug information to covered individuals; to add
amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975, to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	51	Section 27-45A-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to provide
54 to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the 55 Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	52	circumstances when pharmacies may refuse to dispense drugs; to
55 Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,	53	amend Sections 34-23-181 and 34-23-185, Code of Alabama 1975,
	54	to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to enforce the
56 Code of Alabama 1975, to provide that an investigation into	55	Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to amend Section 34-23-187,
	56	Code of Alabama 1975, to provide that an investigation into



57	fraud, waste, or abuse by a pharmacy benefits manager falls
58	under the Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act; and to add Section
59	34-23-188, to authorize the Commissioner of Insurance to
60	investigate complaints concerning an entity licensed by the
61	Department of Insurance that audits a pharmacy.
62	BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:
63	Section 1. Sections 27-45A-3, 27-45A-6, 27-45A-7,
64	27-45A-8, and 27-45A-10, Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to
65	read as follows:
66	"\$27-45A-3
67	For purposes of this chapter, the following words shall
68	have the following meanings:
69	(1) ACTUAL ACQUISITION COST. The Average Acquisition
70	Cost (AAC) of a drug for the State of Alabama, as published by
71	the Alabama Medicaid Agency. If no AAC is available, the term
72	means the wholesale acquisition cost (WAC + 0 %).
73	(2) AFFILIATE or PBM AFFILIATE. An entity, including,
74	but not limited to, a pharmacy, health insurer, or group
75	purchasing organization that directly or indirectly, through
76	one or more intermediaries, has one of the following
77	affiliations:
78	a. Owns, controls, or has an investment interest in a
79	pharmacy benefits manager.
80	b. Is owned, controlled by, or has an investment
81	interest holder who is a pharmacy benefits manager.
82	c. Is under common ownership or corporate control with
83	a pharmacy benefits manager.
84	(1)(3) CLAIMS PROCESSING SERVICES. The administrative

services performed in connection with the processing and

85

86 adjudicating of claims relating to pharmacist services that 87 include any of the following: 88 a. Receiving payments for pharmacist services. 89 b. Making payments to pharmacists or pharmacies for 90 pharmacist services. 91 c. Both paragraphs a. and b. 92 (2) (4) COVERED INDIVIDUAL. A member, policyholder, 93 subscriber, enrollee, beneficiary, dependent, or other individual participating in a health benefit plan. 94 95 (3) (5) HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN. A policy, contract, certificate, or agreement entered into, offered, or issued by 96 a payor or health insurer to provide, deliver, arrange for, 97 98 pay for, or reimburse any of the costs of physical, mental, or 99 behavioral health care services, including pharmaceutical 100 services. (4) (6) HEALTH INSURER. An entity subject to the 101 102 insurance laws of this state and rules of the department, or 103 subject to the jurisdiction of the department, that contracts 104 or offers to contract to provide, deliver, arrange for, pay 105 for, or reimburse any of the costs of health care services, 106 including, but not limited to, a sickness and accident 107 insurance company, a health maintenance organization operating 108 pursuant to Chapter 21A, a nonprofit hospital or health 109 service corporation, a health care service plan organized pursuant to Article 6, Chapter 20 of Title 10A, or any other 110 entity providing a plan of health insurance, health benefits, 111 112 or health services.



113	(7) IN-NETWORK or NETWORK. A network of pharmacists or
114	pharmacies that are paid for pharmacist services pursuant to
115	an agreement with a health benefit plan or a pharmacy benefits
116	manager.
117	(5)(8) OTHER PRESCRIPTION DRUG OR DEVICE SERVICES.
118	Services, other than claims processing services, provided
119	directly or indirectly, whether in connection with or separate
120	from claims processing services, including, but not limited
121	to, any of the following:
122	a. Negotiating rebates , discounts, or other financial
123	incentives and arrangements with drug companies.
124	b. Disbursing or distributing rebates.
125	c. Managing or participating in incentive programs or
126	arrangements for pharmacist services.
127	d. Negotiating or entering into contractual
128	arrangements with pharmacists or pharmacies, or both.
129	e. Developing formularies.
130	f. Designing prescription benefit programs.
131	g. Advertising or promoting services.
132	(9) PAYOR. Any entity other than a health insurer
133	involved in the financing or payment of pharmacist services.
134	(6)(10) PHARMACIST. As defined in Section 34-23-1.
135	(7)(11) PHARMACIST SERVICES. Products, goods, and
136	services, or any combination of products, goods, and services,
137	provided as a part of the practice of pharmacy.
138	(8) (12) PHARMACY. As defined in Section 34-23-1.
139	(9)(13) PHARMACY BENEFITS MANAGER. a. A person,
140	including a wholly or partially owned or controlled subsidiary



141	of a pharmacy benefits manager, that provides claims
142	processing services or other prescription drug or device
143	services, or both, to covered individuals who are employed in
144	or are residents of this state, for health benefit plans. The
145	term includes any person that administers a prescription
146	discount program directly for or on behalf of a pharmacy
147	benefits manager or health benefit plan for drugs to covered
148	individuals which are not reimbursed by a pharmacy benefits
149	manager or are not covered by a health benefit plan.
150	b. Pharmacy benefits manager does not include any of
151	the following:
152	1. A <u>healthcarehealth care</u> facility licensed in this
153	state.
154	2. A <u>healthcarehealth care</u> professional licensed in
155	this state.
156	3. A consultant who only provides advice as to the
157	selection or performance of a pharmacy benefits manager.
158	(10) PBM AFFILIATE. A pharmacy or pharmacist that,
159	directly or indirectly, through one or more intermediaries, is
160	owned or controlled by, or is under common control by, a
161	pharmacy benefits manager.
162	(11) (14) PRESCRIPTION DRUGS. Includes, but is not
163	limited to, certain infusion, compounded, and long-term care <u>,</u>
164	and specialty prescription drugs. The term does not include
165	specialty drugs.
166	(15) REBATE. Any payments or price concessions that
167	accrue to a pharmacy benefits manager or its health benefit
168	plan client, directly or indirectly, including through its PBM



169	affiliate or its subsidiary, third party, or intermediary,
170	including an off-shore purchasing organization, from a
171	pharmaceutical manufacturer or its affiliate, subsidiary,
172	third party, or intermediary. The term includes, but is not
173	limited to, payments, discounts, administration fees, credits,
174	incentives, or penalties associated, directly or indirectly,
175	in any way with claims administered on behalf of a health
176	benefit plan.
177	(12)(16) SPECIALTY DRUGS. Prescription medications that
178	require special handling, administration, or monitoring and
179	are used for the treatment of patients with serious health
180	conditions requiring complex therapies, and that are eligible
181	for specialty tier placement by the Centers for Medicare and
182	Medicaid Services pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 423.560.
183	(17) SPREAD PRICING. A prescription drug pricing model
184	used by a pharmacy benefits manager in which the pharmacy
185	benefits manager charges a health benefit plan a contracted
186	price for prescription drugs that differs from the amount the
187	pharmacy benefits manager pays the pharmacy for the
188	prescription drug, including any post-sale or
189	post-adjudication fees, discounts, or adjustments where not
190	prohibited by law."
191	"§27-45A-6
192	(a) Nothing in this chapter is intended or shall be
193	construed to do any of the following:
194	(1) Bebe in conflict with existing relevant federal
195	law .
196	(2) Apply to any specialty drug.



197	(3) Impact or impact the ability of a hospital to
198	mandate its employees use of a hospital-owned pharmacy.
199	(b) The following provisions shall not apply to the
200	administration by a person of any term, including prescription
201	drug benefits, of a self-funded health benefit plan that is
202	governed by the federal Employee Retirement Income Security
203	Act of 1974, 29 U.S.C. §1001 et. seq.:
204	(1) Subdivisions (1) and (5) of Section 27-45A-8.
205	(2) Subdivisions (2), (3), (6), and (7) of Section
206	27-45A-10. "
207	"\$27-45A-7
208	Reserved In addition to any other remedy provided by
209	law, a pharmacist, pharmacy, or covered individual who is
210	aggrieved by a violation of this chapter may bring a civil
211	action against a pharmacy benefits manager for damages or
212	equitable remedies."
213	"\$27-45A-8
214	With respect to a covered individual, Aa pharmacy
215	benefits manager, directly or through an affiliate or a
216	contracted third party, may not do any of the following:
217	(1) Require a covered individual, as a condition of
218	payment or reimbursement, to purchase pharmacist services,
219	including, but not limited to, prescription drugs, exclusively
220	through a mail-order pharmacy or pharmacy benefits manager
221	affiliate.
222	(2) Prohibit or limit any covered individual from

(2) Prohibit or limit any covered individual from
 selecting an in-network pharmacy or pharmacist of his or her
 choice who meets and agrees to the terms and conditions,



225 including reimbursements, in the pharmacy benefits manager's 226 contract.

227 (3) Impose a monetary advantage or penalty under a 228 health benefit plan that would affect a covered individual's 229 choice of pharmacy among those pharmacies that have chosen to 230 contract with the pharmacy benefits manager under the same 231 terms and conditions, including reimbursements. For purposes 232 of this subdivision, "monetary advantage or penalty" includes, 233 but is not limited to, a higher copayment, a waiver of a 234 copayment, a reduction in reimbursement services, a 235 requirement or limit on the number of days of a drug supply for which reimbursement will be allowed, or a promotion of one 236 237 participating pharmacy over another by these methods.

(4)a. Use a covered individual's pharmacy services data collected pursuant to the provision of claims processing services for the purpose of soliciting, marketing, or referring the covered individual to a mail-order pharmacy or PBM affiliate.

b. This subdivision shall not limit a health benefit
plan's use of pharmacy services data for the purpose of
administering the health benefit plan.

246 c. This subdivision shall not prohibit a pharmacy 247 benefits manager from notifying a covered individual that a 248 less costly option for a specific prescription drug is 249 available through a mail-order pharmacy or PBM affiliate, 250 provided the notification shall state that switching to the 251 less costly option is not mandatory. The commissioner, by 252 rule, may determine the language of the notification



253	authorized under this paragraph made by a pharmacy benefits
254	manager to a covered individual.
255	(5) Require a covered individual to make a payment for
256	a prescription drug at the point of sale in an amount that
257	exceeds the <pre>lesser of the following:</pre>
258	a. The contracted cost share amount.
259	b. An amount an individual would pay for a prescription
260	if that individual were paying without insurance.
261	(6) Increase a covered individual's cost-sharing
262	percentage or ratio at or after the point of sale by raising
263	the deductible, copayment, or coinsurance, or by requiring any
264	other out-of-pocket payment as a means to recoup the
265	dispensing cost of a pharmacist or pharmacy."
266	"\$27-45A-10
267	(a) With respect to a pharmacist or pharmacy, Aa
268	pharmacy benefits manager, directly or through an affiliate or
269	a contracted third party, may not do any of the following:
270	(1) Reimburse an in-network pharmacy or pharmacist in
271	the state an amount less than the amount that the pharmacy
272	benefits manager reimburses a similarly situated PBM affiliate
273	for providing the same pharmacist services to covered
274	individuals in the same health benefit plan.
275	(2) Reimburse an in-network pharmacy or pharmacist for
276	a drug in an amount that is less than or exceeds the actual
277	acquisition cost plus the cost of dispensing pursuant to
278	Section 27-45A-13.
279	(3) Practice spread pricing in this state.
280	(2) (4) Deny a pharmacy or pharmacist the right to



participate as a <u>contractnetwork</u> provider if the pharmacy or pharmacist meets and agrees to the terms and conditions, including reimbursements, in the pharmacy benefits manager's contract.

285 (3) (5) Impose credentialing standards on a pharmacist 286 or pharmacy beyond or more onerous than the licensing 287 standards set by the Alabama State Board of Pharmacy or charge 288 a pharmacy or pharmacist aany fee in connection with in regard 289 to, without limitation, network enrollment, network 290 participation, credentialing or recredentialing, change of 291 ownership, submission of claims, adjudication of claims, claims processed through discount card programs, or otherwise, 292 293 if not in conjunction with an audit conducted pursuant to Article 8 of Chapter 23 of Title 34, -provided that this 294 295 subdivision shall not prohibit a pharmacy benefits manager from setting minimum requirements for participating in a 296 297 pharmacy network.

298 (4) (6) Prohibit a pharmacist or pharmacy, while filling 299 a prescription for a covered individual, regardless of payment 300 source, from providing athe covered individual specific 301 information on the amount of the covered individual's cost 302 share for the covered individual's prescription drug and the clinical efficacy of a more affordable alternative drug if one 303 is available, or penalize a pharmacist or pharmacy for 304 305 disclosing this information to a covered individual or for selling to a covered individual a more affordable alternative 306 if one is available with any relevant information about the 307 308 prescription, including the following:



a. The cost and reimbursement amount of the drug.

310 b. An alternative drug.

311 <u>c. Any other information considered to be necessary in</u> 312 the professional judgment of the pharmacist.

313 <u>(5)(7)</u> Prohibit a pharmacist or pharmacy from offering 314 and providing delivery services to a covered individual as an 315 ancillary service of the pharmacy, provided all of the 316 following requirements are met:

317 a. The pharmacist or pharmacy can demonstrate quality,318 stability, and safety standards during delivery.

319 b. The pharmacist or pharmacy does not charge any 320 delivery or service fee to a pharmacy benefits manager or 321 health insurer.

322 c. The pharmacist or pharmacy alerts the covered 323 individual that he or she will be responsible for any delivery 324 service fee associated with the delivery service, and that the 325 pharmacy benefits manager or health insurer will not reimburse 326 the delivery service fee.

327 (6) (8) Charge or hold a pharmacist or pharmacy 328 responsible for a fee or penalty relating to an audit 329 conducted pursuant to The Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act, 330 Article 8 of Chapter 23 of Title 34, provided this prohibition 331 does not restrict recoupments made in accordance with the 332 Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act.

333 (7)(9) Charge a pharmacist or pharmacy a point-of-sale 334 or retroactive fee or otherwise recoup funds from a pharmacy 335 in connection with claims for which the pharmacy has already 336 been paid, unless the recoupment is made pursuant to an audit



337 conducted in accordance with the Pharmacy Audit Integrity 338 ActArticle 8 of Chapter 23 of Title 34. 339 (8) (10) Except for a drug reimbursed, directly or 340 indirectly, by the Medicaid program, vary the amount a 341 pharmacy benefits manager reimburses an entity for a drug, 342 including each and every prescription medication that is 343 eligible for specialty tier placement by the Centers for 344 Medicare and Medicaid Services pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 345 423.560, regardless of any provision of law to the contrary, on the basis of whether: 346 347 a. The drug is subject to an agreement under 42 U.S.C. § 256b; or 348 349 b. The entity participates in the program set forth in 42 U.S.C. § 256b. 350 351 (9) (11) If an entity participates, directly or indirectly, in the program set forth in 42 U.S.C. § 256b, do 352 353 any of the following: 354 a. Assess a fee, charge-back, or other adjustment on 355 the entity. 356 b. Restrict access to the pharmacy benefits manager's 357 pharmacy network. 358 c. Require the entity to enter into a contract with a 359 specific pharmacy to participate in the pharmacy benefits 360 manager's pharmacy network. 361 d. Create a restriction or an additional charge on a 362 patient who chooses to receive drugs from the entity. e. Create any additional requirements or restrictions 363 364 on the entity.



365 (10) (12) Require a claim for a drug to include a 366 modifier to indicate that the drug is subject to an agreement 367 under 42 U.S.C. § 256b. 368 (11) (13) Penalize or retaliate against a pharmacist or 369 pharmacy for exercising rights under this chapter or the 370 Pharmacy Audit Integrity Act. " 371 Section 2. Section 27-45A-13 is added to the Code of 372 Alabama 1975, to read as follows: \$27-45A-13 373 (a) A pharmacy benefits manager shall include in its 374 375 reimbursement of a prescription drug to a pharmacist or pharmacy the cost of a professional dispensing fee as a 376 377 predetermined, average cost that is applied uniformly and 378 equally to all network pharmacies, and which shall not be 379 below the professional dispensing fee paid by the State of Alabama under Title XIX of the federal Social Security Act, 380 381 provided that the cost of the professional dispensing fee shall be borne by the pharmacy benefits manager and not the 382

383 covered individual as prohibited under Section 27-45A-8.

(b) (1) If a pharmacy benefits manager or a payor reimburses a pharmacist or pharmacy an amount below the pharmacist or pharmacy's dispensing cost for a particular drug, the pharmacist or pharmacy may decline to dispense the drug to a covered individual and may direct the individual to another pharmacist or pharmacy.

390 (2) A pharmacy benefits manager may not take any
391 retaliatory action against, or impose any penalty on, a
392 pharmacy or pharmacist who declines to dispense a drug to a



393 covered individual under subdivision (1), including 394 cancellation or nonrenewal of a contract, or bringing a suit 395 for breach of contract. 396 (c) Subject to state and federal privacy laws, a 397 pharmacist or pharmacy may disclose any reimbursement rate for 398 its prescription dispensing services to an ultimate payor for 399 those services, including an employer, the state, or the 400 federal government. Section 3. Sections 34-23-181, 34-23-185, and 401 34-23-187, Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as 402 403 follows: "§34-23-181 404 405 The following words shall have the following meanings 406 as used in this article: 407 (1) COMMISSIONER. The Commissioner of the Department of 408 Insurance of the State of Alabama. 409 (1) (2) HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN. Any individual or group 410 plan, employee welfare benefit plan, policy, or contract for 411 health care services issued, delivered, issued for delivery, 412 or renewed in this state by a health care insurer, health 413 maintenance organization, accident and sickness insurer, 414 fraternal benefit society, nonprofit hospital service 415 corporation, nonprofit medical service corporation, health 416 care service plan, or any other person, firm, corporation, 417 joint venture, or other similar business entity that pays for insureds or beneficiaries in this state. The term includes, 418 but is not limited to, entities created pursuant to Article 6 419 420 of Chapter 20 of Title 10A. A health benefit plan located or



domiciled outside of the State of Alabama is deemed to be
subject to this article if it receives, processes,
adjudicates, pays, or denies claims for health care services
submitted by or on behalf of patients, insureds, or
beneficiaries who reside in Alabama.

426 (2)-(3) PHARMACY. A place licensed by the Alabama State 427 Board of Pharmacy in which prescriptions, drugs, medicines, 428 medical devices, chemicals, and poisons are sold, offered for 429 sale, compounded, or dispensed and shall include all places 430 whose title may imply the sale, offering for sale, 431 compounding, or dispensing of prescriptions, drugs, medicines, 432 chemicals, or poisons.

433 (3) (4) PHARMACY BENEFITS MANAGEMENT PLAN. An 434 arrangement for the delivery of pharmacist services in which a 435 pharmacy benefits manager undertakes to administer the payment or reimbursement of any of the costs of pharmacist 436 437 services for an enrollee on a prepaid or insured basis that 438 contains one or more incentive arrangements intended to 439 influence the cost or level of pharmacist services between the 440 plan sponsor and one or more pharmacies with respect to the 441 delivery of pharmacist services and requires or creates 442 benefit payment differential incentives for enrollees to use 443 under contract with the pharmacy benefits manager.

444 (4) (5) PHARMACY <u>BENEFITBENEFITS</u> MANAGER. A business 445 that administers the prescription drug or device portion of 446 pharmacy <u>benefitbenefits</u> management plans or health insurance 447 plans on behalf of plan sponsors, insurance companies, unions, 448 and health maintenance organizations. The term includes a



449 person or entity acting for a pharmacy <u>benefit</u><u>benefits</u> manager 450 in a contractual or employment relationship in the performance 451 of pharmacy <u>benefit</u><u>benefits</u> management for a managed care 452 company, nonprofit hospital or medical service organization, 453 insurance company, or third-party payor.

454 (5)(6) PHARMACIST SERVICES. Offering for sale, 455 compounding, or dispensing of prescriptions, drugs, medicines, 456 chemicals, or poisons pursuant to a prescription. Pharmacist 457 services also includes the sale or provision of, counseling 458 of, or fitting of medical devices, including prosthetics and 459 durable medical equipment."

460

"§34-23-185

461 (a) Each entity conducting an audit shall establish a
462 written appeals process under which a pharmacy may appeal an
463 unfavorable preliminary audit report to the entity.

(b) Following the appeal, if the entity finds that an
unfavorable audit report or any portion thereof is
unsubstantiated, the entity shall dismiss the audit report or
that portion without the necessity of any further action.

468 (c) (1) Following the appeal, if any of the issues 469 raised in the appeal are not resolved to the satisfaction of 470 either party, that party may ask for mediation of those 471 unresolved issues unless other remedies are granted under the 472 terms of the contract. A certified mediator shall be chosen by 473 agreement of the parties from the mediators list maintained by 474 the Alabama Supreme Court. The cost of mediation shall be borne by agreement of the parties or by the decision of the 475 476 mediator.



477	(2) Notwithstanding subdivision (1), the commissioner
478	shall have authority to enforce this article, including any
479	action under Chapter 45A of Title 27, and may modify or
480	reverse the findings of an audit report.
481	(3) A pharmacist or pharmacy may file a complaint
482	directly with the commissioner for enforcement of this
483	article."
484	"§34-23-187
485	This article does notshall apply to any audit, review,
486	or investigation that involves alleged fraud, willful
487	misrepresentation, or waste abuse that is initiated by a
488	<pre>pharmacy benefits manager."</pre>
489	Section 4. To add Section 34-23-188 to the Code of
490	Alabama 1975, to read as follows:
491	\$34-23-188
492	The Commissioner of Insurance may investigate
493	complaints of any alleged violation of this article by an
494	auditing entity that is licensed or regulated under Title 27,
495	and shall adopt rules to enforce this article.
496	Section 5. This act shall become effective on October
497	1, 2025.