

May 5, 2015

The Honorable Representative Mitch Greenlick, Chair  
Honorable Members of the House Committee on Health Care  
Oregon State House of Representatives  
Salem, OR

**RE: National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) Support of S.B. 520**

Dear Representative Greenlick:

I am writing today on behalf of the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) to express our support of S.B. 520. This legislation would allow a licensed and properly trained pharmacist to administer immunizations to individuals ages seven and above. The current policies in place in Oregon prevent licensed and trained pharmacists from utilizing their training and expertise to serve younger children. Allowing pharmacists to administer this service safely expands citizen's access to health sustaining immunizations, therefore improving access to preventative care, and decreasing future healthcare system costs.

NCPA represents the pharmacist owners, managers and employees of nearly 23,000 independent community pharmacies across the United States. The nation's independent pharmacies, independent pharmacy franchises and independent chains dispense nearly half of the nation's retail prescription medicines and play a vital role in patient care, including immunizations. In Oregon alone, there are 144 that employ approximately 1,426 individuals full-time.

This legislation is particularly crucial to the health of school aged children. It would allow those ages seven and above to obtain immunizations by a licensed pharmacist, thereby increasing access to life-saving vaccines. According to the National Association of Chain Drugs Stores (NACDS), in calendar year 2014, over 135,400 immunizations were administered in community pharmacies in Oregon. In 2012, only 1.7% of Oregon residents were immunized for influenza, ranking 45th in the country. This legislation is extremely important to increase access to immunizations and therefore benefiting the health and welfare of many citizens of Oregon.

Immunization is one of the most cost effective preventative health care techniques and has led to drastic reductions in the incidence of several diseases associated with morbidity and mortality. However, vaccination rates have not met optimal levels as there are many individuals who are still not receiving such crucial preventative health care. Pharmacists play a vital role in increasing vaccination rates for a variety of reasons. Namely, pharmacies have convenient locations and service hours. This convenience will increase access to vaccinations and allow the patient to receive their immunization more efficiently than having to wait to schedule an appointment with a physician.

A study published in the 2004 journal *Vaccine* compared vaccination rates in states where pharmacists were authorized or were not authorized to administer vaccines. The study indicated that the states that allowed pharmacists to provide immunization had significantly more people in all age groups who were immunized than states that did not authorize pharmacists to vaccinate. Pharmacists are authorized to administer vaccines in all fifty states and in seventeen states pharmacists may administer vaccines to persons of all ages.

Put very simply, this legislation offers patients and parents another option—one that is both very convenient and safe for vaccine access. NCPA fully supports S.B. 520 and feels that the provisions of the bill will promote

greater vaccination rates in Oregon. Oregon's pharmacists are simply asking for the authority to provide the healthcare services they are fully trained and capable of providing.

If you have any questions about any of the information contained in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me at [matt.diloreto@ncpanet.org](mailto:matt.diloreto@ncpanet.org) or at (703) 600-1223.

Sincerely,



Matthew J. DiLoreto  
Director – State Government Affairs

CC: Members of the House Committee on Health Care