



Dear House of Corporations

My name is Courtney McQuade and I am a pharmacist. I represent McQuade's Pharmacy in Westerly, RI and Mystic, CT. We have been in business since 1983. I have been a pharmacist for 20 years and an owner of this location for over 10 years. This pharmacy has been in my family for over 40 years, our grocery stores for over 75 years, so you could say we have deep roots in the community. My family owns multiple grocery stores in Rhode Island and Connecticut. I always wanted to be involved in my family's business, but I always wanted to help people. So, going to pharmacy school was a natural progression.

In the twenty years that I have practiced pharmacy the landscape had changed and not for the better. I am constantly fighting. I am constantly evaluating insurance plans to see if we can afford to keep the plans and the customers. I meet weekly with my father, who owns the grocery stores that my pharmacies are located in to discuss the fact that my department is literally the ONLY one in our stores that can not control costs. This inability is 100% due to Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) underpaying myself and other independent pharmacies for the products that we dispense to patients in the community. Imagine buying a medication for \$575.00 and only getting reimbursed from the insurance company \$525.00? This happens all day long. This is tragic. This is why independent pharmacies are closing all over America. We are currently living in 'no-man lands' when it comes to reimbursement from the PBMs. We should be getting a known reimbursement based on the National Average Drug Acquisition Cost or NADAC . But as you guessed, this isn't happening. NADAC pricing represents the 'national average purchase price' for a medication. We do not see this reimbursement. We do not see anything even close to this reimbursement. We can not negotiate our contracts from the PBMs it is a 'take it or leave it' situation and it is destroying our profession.

I know that there are not a lot of independent pharmacies remaining in Rhode Island. However, we provide services that are not available at our "big box" competitors. I encourage my staff to spend extra time speaking with patients about their medications. We provide same day delivery services, vaccine services, blister packing of medications to help with adherence in patients that need some additional assistance. It is understood that patient care is my most important goal as a pharmacist and as a business owner. I encourage my staff to go above and beyond to assist patients in their time of need. It is not uncommon for my staff to deliver medication outside of our posted delivery hours to help a hospice patient, a new mom, or a housebound patient. This is who we are. PBM are trying to determine what patients we can see and what medications we can dispense. This is not what I went to school to become. I am a proud member of the health care system. My staff is amazing and well respected for the services we provide each and every day. We get transfer every day from patients from the 'chains' that have been lost in the shuffle. I am not trying to say that we are perfect, but we are a huge relief for so many patients in our community. We are the helpers. We are the accessible member of the healthcare system. We are the trusted profession.

My pharmacy provides delivery to Block Island. Without McQuade's the health clinic and patients would be without same day access to critical medications. All of these examples and circumstances are just small glimpses into who we are and what we do each and every day. Under the current environment, independent pharmacies are being forced out of the marketplace secondary to an uneven playing field. We are a necessary member of the team and provide much needed care and support in our community.

It may not seem like much to you, but I urge you to support H7720 and HB 8143. We need to be able to help patients. I need to be able to support my community and my community relies on me each and every day. We are the helpers.

Sincerely,
Courtney McQuade, PharmD
Director of Pharmacy Services
McQuade's Pharmacy