

February 24, 2025

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan Chairwoman
House Committee on Health and Human Services
82 Smith Street, House Lounge
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: Support of 2025 H-5427, with suggestion to amend to include all vaccines for all ages.

Honorable Committee Members:

I am writing as a final-year pharmacy student who recently completed a rotation at Asthenis, where I had the privilege of working alongside a team dedicated to serving underserved communities. Throughout this rotation, I had the unique opportunity to witness the critical role that pharmacists play in public health, particularly in ensuring that children from diverse cultural backgrounds and varying immigration statuses receive essential vaccines.

In many of these communities, families face numerous challenges—linguistic, financial, and often, systemic barriers to care. Yet, they still prioritized bringing their children to Asthenis to ensure that their vaccines were up to date for school, understanding the importance of these immunizations for their children's well-being and future. I worked closely with these families, and their determination and resilience left a lasting impression on me. It highlighted the vital connection between access to care and the health of our communities, especially in underserved areas.

As a prospective pharmacist, I fully support Bill H-5427, as I believe it represents a meaningful step in expanding access to vaccines. However, I urge lawmakers to amend the bill to include all vaccines for all ages. Pharmacists are a critical part of the healthcare system, and expanding our scope of practice to include a broader range of vaccinations will help alleviate some of the pressure on an overburdened healthcare system. More importantly, it will provide more access to care for individuals who may not have regular access to primary care physicians, or who face barriers to receiving care in other settings.

In my experience, many patients who come to the pharmacy may not have access to a primary care provider, or may struggle to navigate the healthcare system due to cultural or financial challenges. By allowing pharmacists to administer a wider range of vaccines, we can offer a much-needed alternative to the traditional healthcare setting. This would not only reduce the strain on other parts of the healthcare system but also ensure that people, regardless of their age, immigration status, or background, can receive the preventive care they need, where and when they need it.

I am deeply passionate about the potential pharmacists have to impact public health, and I believe that with the right support, we can play an even greater role in improving access to care, especially for underserved communities. I urge you to consider the importance of amending this bill to include all vaccines, for individuals of all ages, so that we can better serve our communities and help relieve some of the strain on our healthcare system.

Sincerely,

Brianna Allison

Brianna Allison
PharmD Candidate, 2025
University of Rhode Island
College of Pharmacy