



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

RE: Support with Recommendations for H5427 - An Act Relating To Businesses and Professions – Pharmacies

Dear Chairwoman Donovan,

Thank you for the opportunity to write with support to refine H5427 -An Act Relating To Businesses and Professions – Pharmacies

While I fully support the underlying intent of H5427, I recommend the following refinement to ensure the committee reflects the accessibility of all childhood vaccines down to age 3 by pharmacists in Rhode Island as permitted during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for underserved populations.

1. Pharmacist Administer Vaccines as Allowed in the Pandemic

H5427: Administration of influenza and COVID 19 immunizations to individuals between the ages of nine (9) years and eighteen (18) years, inclusive.

Amendment: Remove the age limiting language of (9) years and eighteen (18) years, inclusive. Pharmacist have been permitted and already proven to be able to safely administer all childhood vaccines down to age 3 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Amendment: Replace “influenza” and “COVID-19” with “CDC/ACIP or FDA approved” immunizations. New language allows pharmacists to administer all CDC recommended vaccines as allowed during the COVID-19 pandemic, including influenza and COVID-19 vaccines.

2. Pharmacists Administer Vaccines as Permitted During the COVID-19 Pandemic

H5427: Section 5-19.1-2. The administration of adult immunizations.

Amendment: Remove the age limiting language of “adult”.

Impact of refinement recommendations will improve the proposed bill’s accessibility of childhood vaccines by pharmacists for:

- **Pregnant Teens:** This will help the pregnant 17-year-old without a primary care provider receive access to the RSV vaccines from a pharmacist to protect her infant.
- **Families:** This will help families with teenagers receive timely access to the HPV vaccine from their pharmacists, improve vaccination rates, and **protect teens from cancers caused by HPV.**
- **Underserved and Undocumented Children:** This will help **children from underserved communities** that must wait 4 to 6 months for a doctor’s appointment before they are seen to receive their vaccines.
- **Schools:** This will help prevent delays to school enrollment for children K-12 that are undocumented or from underserved communities that need their immunization records to register for the next grade on time and not fall further behind in class.

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important legislation, we are grateful for your continued support in improving accessibility of routine childhood vaccines for Rhode Islanders and look forward to working together to advance policies that protect the public's health.

Sincerely,

Eugenio Fernandez

Eugenio Fernandez, Jr.
PharmD, MBA, MPH

CC: Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services