

25 February 2025

[submitted electronically via: HouseHealthandHumanServices@rilegislature.gov]

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan

Chair, House Committee on Health and Human Services

State House

82 Smith Street Providence, RI 02903

**RE: Testimony in Support of House Bill 5427 (McGaw) With Amendments– AN ACT
RELATING TO BUSINESSES AND PROFESSIONS -- PHARMACIES {LC1417/1}**

Dear Chairperson Donovan and members of the House Health and Human Services:

I'm Dr. Jeffrey Bratberg, a clinical professor of pharmacy practice and clinical research at the University of Rhode Island (URI) College of Pharmacy and a staunch advocate for public health, particularly immunizations, for decades. I have worked with the Rhode Island Pharmacists Association (RIPA) and the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) since 2007 on legislation that extended independent and broad adult immunization authority to pharmacists, expanded that authority for influenza vaccination for 9-18 year olds, and helped RIDOH pass legislation to modify the childhood immunization registry into a lifetime registry.

While I support the intent and spirit of H5427 extending the authority of pharmacists to administer COVID-19 vaccines to 9-18 year olds, **this bill doesn't go far enough.**

I recommend that pharmacists' authority to administer all recommended vaccines to adults be extended to administering all recommended vaccines to children 3 years old and up, lowering the age and broadening the number of vaccines beyond just influenza and COVID-19, to match and make permanent the current vaccine authority granted to pharmacists through amendments to the federal Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act in Rhode Island.

The PREP Act, since 2021, and now extended to 2029, allows licensed and trained pharmacists to administer all age-appropriate vaccines to people ages 3 and up.

[URI has led the country as one of the first colleges of pharmacy to require immunization education and certification for all students before they graduate](#), thus permitting licensed student interns who have completed the training the authority to vaccinate under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist. This 20 hour-long training includes didactic and practical portions, including adult and pediatric vaccination schedules, comparison of vaccine administration between adults and children, including techniques to communicate with children and their caregivers.

I strongly urge the committee to amend H5427 to grant pharmacists the authority to recommend and administer any guideline-recommended vaccine to people 3 years of age and older.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Bratberg, PharmD

jefbratberg@uri.edu