

5 March 2025

[submitted electronically via: HouseHealthandHumanServices@rilegislature.gov]

The Honorable Susan Donovan Chair, House Committee on Health & Human Services
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: (INSERT BILL NUMBER(s))– AN ACT RELATING TO INSURANCE -- ACCIDENT AND SICKNESS INSURANCE POLICIES

Dear Chair Donovan and members of the Committee:

My name is Madison Hartling, and I am a pharmacist practicing in Rhode Island. I am writing today to express my sincere support of House Bill 7934: PHARMACIES (Administration of routine, scheduled, or recommended immunizations to individuals between the ages of three (3) and eighteen (18) years, inclusive).

I support H7934 as it will increase access to essential, lifesaving vaccinations for our most vulnerable members of society.

Pharmacists are incredibly accessible, knowledgeable, and caring healthcare providers. The role of pharmacists as a vital member of the healthcare team. A 2022 study from the Journal of American Pharmacists Association found that 90% of Americans live within 5 miles of a pharmacy nationwide.¹ As the primary care provider shortage in Rhode Island rages on, pharmacists become an essential piece of an ever-complicating puzzle.

The Center for Disease Control and Pediatric Pharmacist Association agree the expanding pharmacists' ability to vaccinate children down to 3 years of age in line with the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act will decrease vaccine-preventable illness related complications. Pediatric vaccination rates are lower in Black and Hispanic children, those of lower socioeconomic status, and those living in rural areas.² Pre-pandemic pediatric immunization rates are still cause for concern even as normal activities have resumed.

The passage of this bill is essential to ensuring children are protected against life altering yet preventable diseases. I urge your support of House Bill 7934.

Sincerely,

Madison Hartling, PharmD, RPh

1. Berenbrok LA, Tang S, Gabriel N, et al. Access to community pharmacies: A nationwide geographic information systems cross-sectional analysis. *J Am Pharm Assoc (2003)*. 2022;62(6):1816-1822.e2. doi:10.1016/j.japh.2022.07.003
2. Giroto, J. E., Klein, K. C., Cober, M. P., Cavness, A. A., Hagemann, T. M., Warminski, S., & Hernandez, T. (2024). Pharmacists as Partners in Pediatric Immunizations: A White Paper From the Pediatric Pharmacy Association. *The journal of pediatric pharmacology and therapeutics : JPPT : the official journal of PPAG*, 29(6), 660–666. <https://doi.org/10.5863/1551-6776-29.6.660>