

Dear Chair Murray and Members of Senate HHS:

My name is Eric Pohl. I am a 4th-year pharmacy student at the University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy. I currently work in the community pharmacy setting at CVS in Charlestown, Rhode Island. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 2851.

Senate Bill 2851 enables trained pharmacists to provide test-to-treat services for conditions included in statewide protocol, including but not limited to flu, COVID-19, and strep. In addition to administering CLIA-waived tests, this bill also allows pharmacists to prescribe medications and provide counseling for approved disease states.

I currently work in community pharmacy and have seen patients coming in from urgent care to pick up medications for acute conditions such as COVID-19 and flu more times than I can count. Patients often come directly from urgent care, arriving before their prescription is even sent over, which causes them to wait, increases the risk of infecting others, and delays their treatment. Allowing pharmacists to test and treat for these conditions would reduce delays in care and increase access to timely treatment.

Similar to how healthcare providers in doctor's offices or urgent care settings receive training to administer these tests, pharmacists will receive training and continuing education on specific tests and medications. In addition, just as other healthcare providers are reimbursed for testing and prescribing for these conditions, this bill allows pharmacists to be reimbursed for their services.

This bill provides an important opportunity to increase accessibility to testing and treatment for acute conditions that pharmacists are trained to manage and that are well within their scope of practice. Passing this bill would reduce time to treatment and improve community health by providing more accessible, timely care. Thank you.

Eric Pohl,  
Doctor of Pharmacy Candidate  
South Kingstown, Rhode Island

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Pohl". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.