

Testimony concerning HB 2155: prescription refills
House Health and Human Services Committee
Presented by Debra Billingsley
On behalf of
The Kansas State Board of Pharmacy
February 8, 2005

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

My name is Debra Billingsley, and I am the Executive Secretary for the Kansas State Board of Pharmacy. Our Board is created by statute and is comprised of six members, each of whom are appointed by the Governor. Of the six, five are licensed pharmacists and one is a member of the general public.

Currently, a pharmacist may only refill a prescription if the prescription instructions state that the prescription may be refilled. Often a patient will not realize that he has no more refills until he goes to the pharmacy over the weekend. If the pharmacist can contact the physician the patient can get his prescription refilled. However, it is often difficult for the pharmacist to make contact with the physician over the weekend. Further, pharmacies often fax refill requests to the physician and they never get returned. Strict interpretation of our law wouldn't allow a pharmacist to dispense without further authorization. This leaves the patient in the precarious position of not having his blood pressure medicine or heart medication over the weekend.

This bill would permit a pharmacist to supply a patient with a small amount of drugs to get the patient through the weekend should the pharmacist be unable to reach the physician. This would only be permitted when the pharmacist knows the patient's drug regimen and believes that it would be necessary for the patient's health, safety and welfare that he not have his maintenance medication discontinued. This would be a provision that would be used on rare occasions and it would place judgmental responsibility on the pharmacist.

This language is law in Colorado and the Colorado Board of Pharmacy reported that they have had no problems with any abuses. It is used sparingly and only in those instances where the patient has been receiving refills of maintenance medication and it would be in the patient's best interest not to go without his drug. We would respectfully request that that this statute be amended to add this additional language as the Board believes it would be in the best interest of their patient's health, safety and welfare.

Thank you very much for permitting me to testify, and I will be happy to yield to questions.

