

The Honorable Daniel Hawkins, Chair  
House Committee on Health and Human Services  
Kansas State Capitol  
300 SW 10th St.  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

February 23, 2016

**RE: National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) Support of H.B. 2646**

Dear Representative Hawkins:

I am writing today on behalf of the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) to express our support of H.B. 2646. This legislation would allow a pharmacist, a pharmacy student or intern who is working under the direct supervision and control of a pharmacist to administer immunizations to individuals ages six and above. The current policies in place in Kansas prevent licensed and trained pharmacists from utilizing their training and expertise to serve younger children. Allowing pharmacists to administer this service safely expands citizen's access to health sustaining immunizations, therefore improving access to preventative care, and decreasing future healthcare system costs.

NCPA represents the pharmacist owners, managers and employees of nearly 23,000 independent community pharmacies across the United States. The nation's independent pharmacies, independent pharmacy franchises and independent chains dispense nearly half of the nation's retail prescription medicines and play a vital role in patient care, including immunizations. In Kansas alone, there are 279 community pharmacies that employ approximately 2,762 individuals full-time.

Immunization is one of the most cost effective preventative health care techniques and has led to drastic reductions in the incidence of several diseases associated with morbidity and mortality. However, vaccination rates have not met optimal levels as there are many individuals who are still not receiving such crucial preventative health care. Pharmacist-provided patient vaccine education, screening, and recommendations have been shown to increase vaccination rates.<sup>1</sup> In the United States annually, more than 50,000 adults and 300 children die from vaccine-preventable diseases or from their complications; however, immunizations, including those administered by pharmacists, assist in preventing an estimated 14 million cases of vaccine-preventable diseases and 33,000 cases of death.<sup>2</sup>

Pharmacists play a vital role in increasing vaccination rates for a variety of reasons. Namely, pharmacies have convenient locations and service hours. This convenience will increase access to vaccinations and allow the patient to receive their immunization more efficiently than having to wait to schedule an appointment with a physician. Pharmacists are authorized to administer vaccines in all fifty states and in twenty-seven states pharmacists may administer vaccines to persons of all ages.

Put very simply, this legislation offers patients and parents another option—one that is both very convenient and safe for vaccine access. NCPA fully supports H.B. 2646 and feels that the provisions of the bill will promote greater vaccination rates in Kansas. Kansas's pharmacists are simply asking for the authority to provide the healthcare services they are fully trained and capable of providing. If you have

any questions about any of the information contained in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me at [fara.klein@ncpanet.org](mailto:fara.klein@ncpanet.org) or at (703) 838-2694.

Sincerely,



Fara S. Klein  
Manger, State Government Affairs

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

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<sup>1</sup> Fuchs J. The provision of pharmaceutical advice improves patient vaccination status. *Pharm Pract (Granada)*. 2006;4(4):163–167.

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Medicine Report. *Shaping the Future for Health - Calling the Shots Immunization Finance Policies and Practice*. [http://books.nap.edu/html/calling\\_the\\_shots/reportbrief.pdf](http://books.nap.edu/html/calling_the_shots/reportbrief.pdf). Accessed November 26, 2009.