



To: House Committee on Health and Human Services
From: Rob Tinsley, Currus CEO
Date: March 11, 2022
Re: Support of SB 200- Point of Care Testing

Chairwoman Landwehr:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our support of Senate Bill 200. I am Rob Tinsley, submitting testimony on behalf of Currus.

Currus is a cooperative that represents independent pharmacies across the state of Kansas. Formally known as Kansas Independent Pharmacy Service Corporation (KPSC), Currus has served independent pharmacies in Kansas for over 35 years. With over 200 independent pharmacies in each corner of the state and everywhere in between, independent pharmacies are the local connection to patients.

SB 200 provides pharmacy the ability to continue serving Kansans in a similar manner as provided during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since spring of 2020 at the height of the pandemic, Kansas pharmacies have joined pharmacies across the nation in providing COVID-19 testing in a safe, secure and time efficient manner. COVID-19 tests offered by pharmacies include both the rapid test and lab tests, and samples are taken with a swab or a saliva test. The ability for local pharmacies to provide COVID-19 testing provides timely access in both rural and urban settings as 95% of Kansans live within two miles of a pharmacy.

SB 200 would allow Kansas pharmacies to offer similar non-invasive tests such as influenza and strep that are a swab-based test similar to the COVID-19 test. As we anticipate the end of the pandemic, Kansans will still deal with other common ailments, including influenza and strep. Each year Kansans develop symptoms for these ailments and try to self-determine the differences between a common cold and the flu and strep throat or a sore throat. Studies show that when such cases persist undiagnosed, they ultimately contribute to the spread of these ailments.

Point of Care Testing (POCT) will provide a diagnostic test producing rapid and reliable results directly at a retail pharmacy for acute conditions. POCT allows for the screening and treatment process to be a singular encounter, thereby improving access to care, counseling and patient outcomes. Pharmacies collect the necessary samples and rapid test results are available in less than an hour.

In the event a test comes back as positive, the pharmacist would then initiate therapy for a patient in compliance with statewide protocols adopted by the Kansas Board of Pharmacy and the Food and Drug Administration. Results can be shared with the patient's primary provider's office and a follow-up with the provider can be scheduled when necessary. POCT testing enables the entire healthcare team to work together for the treatment of the patient

POCT testing is safe and reliable. The American Association for Clinical Chemistry (AACC) has confirmed that POCT is a now proven approach that can provide faster turnaround of laboratory test results. The testing is regulated by Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA), which regulate all U.S. facilities that perform lab testing, and CLIA holds the responsibility for determination of which tests pharmacies can perform as well as the authorization process to approve pharmacies for testing, so it's a closely monitored and regulated process. There are currently over 10,000 pharmacies nationwide that perform POCT and over 123 CLIA waived tests.

Many states already offer this ability, including our Nebraska and Oklahoma neighbors. POCT testing has been happening in retail pharmacies across the country for over 20 years. Pharmacists are the most accessible and frequently visited member of the healthcare team. Pharmacists are consistently ranked high in consumer confidence surveys. The citizens of Kansas deserve to have fast access to diagnosis and treatment, and Kansas pharmacists are in the ideal position to provide this care to them.

Independent pharmacy stands ready to support the option to provide POCT as a fast, reliable, local and cost-effective option for patients. POCT will bring additional benefits to federally identified medically underserved areas of Kansas as well.

On behalf of our independent pharmacy members, we ask for your support of SB 200.