

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HB 678

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH

Hearing Date: April 14, 2021 8:00 AM

Kenneth Aitken, Mr

Self Retired

Friendswood, TX

Oppose!

Klaudia Forgacova

Self - Operations Manager

Dallas, TX

My name is Klaudia Forgacova and I support HB 678. This will allow vaccination to be administered to people as needed. As long as the pharmacist is capable to administer a vaccine, they should be able to do so. With the strain and limitations on healthcare workers and huge rapid need for vaccination now with COVID-19, we need vaccinations administered as much as able. This keeps people protected from disease and allows healthcare workers to work where they can have the most impact. I encourage passing HB 678.

Betty Tomei

BottomLine Personal

Richmond, TX

It is so important for the well being of our Children. Please help save Texas.

Jaime Barrera, Dr

Richard's Pharmacy

Mission, TX

I am writing to ask you to support House Bill 678 in the House Public Health Committee. This legislation would allow highly trained pharmacist immunizers to order and administer all CDC-recommended vaccines without a prescription to anyone 3 years and older. Pharmacists have played a vital role in providing childhood and COVID-19 vaccines during the pandemic. However, the current expanded federal immunization authority for pharmacists is only temporary. Texas law must be amended to make this authority permanent and allow thousands of pharmacists to continue providing necessary vaccinations to keep Texans safe and healthy after the pandemic is over.

Jana Bennett

self, community pharmacist

Gordonville, TX

I am writing to ask you to support House Bill 678 in the House Public Health Committee. This legislation would allow highly trained pharmacist immunizers to order and administer all CDC-recommended vaccines without a prescription to anyone 3 years

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and older. Pharmacists have played a vital role in providing childhood and COVID-19 vaccines during the pandemic. However, the current expanded federal immunization authority for pharmacists is only temporary. Texas law must be amended to make this authority permanent and allow thousands of pharmacists to continue providing necessary vaccinations to keep Texans safe and healthy after the pandemic is over. As a community pharmacist and owner of an independent pharmacy owner, I am on the forefront of this pandemic. I have seen the impact the my single small business can have on the health of my community. I, along with my team of register technicians who have become certified to administer Covid-19 vaccines, have taken the duty of immunizing our neighbors to heart. Although we are all very weary, we continue to step up to the challenge of getting this task done. Moving forward it is very important that we have the authority to care for our people. We have proven that we can do it under the worst of circumstances and would appreciate your much needed support of this bill to allow us to continue to so.

David Tebeau

Self

Rockwall, TX

Beating hearts are life

Sharon Rush, R. Ph.

Self, Pharmacist and Immunization Trainer

Dripping Springs, TX

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I have been an immunizing pharmacist since 1999 and trainer for the American Pharmacists Association immunization certificate course since 2003. I served as the Central Texas immunization coordinator for H-E-B Pharmacy for nine years, including during the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic. I am now full-time faculty at The University of Texas at Austin College of Pharmacy and train our student pharmacists to be immunizers. I recently trained ~1,000 certified pharmacy technicians to be immunizers under the requirements of the PREP Act. During the last few years, I have been training Dell Medical School students to be immunizers. They are doing this strictly on a volunteer basis since it is not part of their regular curriculum like it is with our College.

Through all this time, I have had the privilege of administering over 30,000 potentially life-saving immunizations to a wide variety of populations. Of all the responsibilities I have had, providing these immunizations has been my most rewarding experience. Receiving shots can be full of anxiety, but I cannot tell you how many patients thank me for being there and helping them stay safe. So many cannot afford a doctor's visit fee or even have a primary care physician they see on a regular basis. Many of the shots I give are in the evenings, weekends and holidays when most healthcare providers are closed and inaccessible. They bring in their entire families all at one time so all are protected. I am not a substitution for a primary care physician and would never claim to be. I am extension of a healthcare team where we work together to provide our patients the best care and I encourage wellness visits.

Pharmacy is the only healthcare profession that has required and standardized immunization training. We must successfully pass a 20 hour course and continue to obtain three hours of immunization-related continuing education every licensing period to make sure we keep up-to-date. I provide that continuing education for the state of Texas. All other healthcare professions learn on the job with no standards in place concerning what they learn. Based on our training and patient screening procedures, we are highly qualified to order and administer these vaccines at any time, not just during a pandemic.

Thank you for your time.

Sharon Rush

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Kacey Blackerby, Pharm. D.

Leonard Pharmacy

Leonard, TX

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Thomas Dinh

self, pharmacist

Fort Worth, TX

I am writing to ask you to support House Bill 678 in the House Public Health Committee. This legislation would allow highly trained pharmacist immunizers to order and administer all CDC-recommended vaccines without a prescription to anyone 3 years and older. Pharmacists have played a vital role in providing childhood and COVID-19 vaccines during the pandemic. However, the current expanded federal immunization authority for pharmacists is only temporary. Texas law must be amended to make this authority permanent and allow thousands of pharmacists to continue providing necessary vaccinations to keep Texans safe and healthy after the pandemic is over.

Richard B Swint

Swint Ent

Paris, TX

This is a deviation from the concept of certification of credentials the public trusts for the practice of medicine.

Kailea Humphreys

Self

Dallas, TX

Please OPPOSE HB 678

HB 678 would allow pharmacists to administer any licensed childhood vaccine to children 3 years old and up. Current law only allows pharmacists to give children older than 7 years flu shots only.

HB 678 trivializes very real vaccine risks and serious reactions by moving vaccination for toddlers and young children to the corner drug store or grocery store pharmacy.

Most pharmacies and grocery stores don't have lifesaving defibrillators like they do in doctors' offices to save the lives of infants and children who have an immediate life-threatening reaction to vaccines.

This bill undermines the doctor patient relationship and removes critical health history screenings prior to vaccination.

Pharmacists don't have the necessary medical history of an infant or child or the time to prescreen for contraindications based on a child's personal and family history and unique health needs prior to vaccination. Children today receive 69 doses of vaccines for 16 different viral and bacterial illnesses and there are 57 different unique vaccines used in the United States used for adults and children. Pharmacy schools provide very limited vaccine education. 80 accredited U.S. pharmacy schools responded to a recent survey and the mean "contact hours" dedicated to vaccination in U.S. pharmacy school curriculum is only 8.4 hours. The support of pharmacists on this bill presents a serious conflict of interest because of the financial benefits they will receive if this bill passes.

America's biopharmaceutical research companies are developing 258 vaccines. The U.S. Vaccine Market alone was \$36.45

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billion in 2018, and is expected to reach \$58.4 billion by 2024 and pharmacists stand to increase their profits substantially by being allowed to vaccinate toddlers and children.

This conflict is compounded by the fact that Pharmacists will have no liability for the injuries and deaths caused by the vaccines they administer to children. Vaccine administrators are shielded from liability for vaccine injuries and deaths through the combination of the law passed by Congress in 1986 establishing the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program and the 2011 Supreme Court Decision BRUESEWITZ ET AL. v. WYETH LLC, FKA WYETH, INC., ET AL.

Federal Circumvention of State Law on Pharmacists Giving Vaccines to Kids was ONLY Supposed to be for the Pandemic. On Aug. 24, 2020, the Federal Register published Secretary of HHS Alex Azar's amendments to the declared emergency for COVID-19 issued under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19. Countermeasures include vaccines for ACIP-recommended vaccines and this amendment allowed pharmacists to administer every ACIP-recommended vaccine to all children three years old or older, regardless of what each state law limits.

Mr. Azar is a former CEO of the pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly, & a former pharmaceutical lobbyist.

Please OPPOSE HB 678.

Susanne Rothschild

Self

Houston, TX

I support

Rexine Howell

none

San Marcos, TX

I support this bill.

Merri Michaels

Adult Education

Houston, TX

I reject the tenets on which HB 678 is founded. Administration of any medication or medical procedure must be performed under supervision of a board certified physician. I raise my voice in objection to this bill and request and expect my legislators to support my view.

Lucas Hill, Dr.

Self - Pharmacist & Professor

Buda, TX

In 2000, the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) degree became the entry-level minimum to become a pharmacist in the U.S. A typical PharmD program is completed over four years AFTER completion of a Bachelor's degree. This is the exact same level of training as a physician (MD/DO) or dentist (DDS), and PharmD training is substantially more focused on appropriate medication treatment and administration, including vaccine administration. Despite this, PharmD graduates face substantial limitations on their ability to provide crucial vaccinations to the Texans. Given 95% of Texans live within 5 minutes of a community pharmacy, it is essential that this change to improve public health. This bill would allow pharmacists to order and administer all CDC-recommended vaccines without a prescription to anyone 3 years or older. It will be opposed primarily by organizations which represent the financial interests of physicians who fear even small and appropriate expansions of scope from other health professionals. I hope you will see through their bad faith arguments regarding patient safety concerns and vote in favor of this important public health legislation. As the parent of a two-year old with special needs whose flu vaccine was delayed by two

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months this year because our pediatrician didn't have it in stock and the local pharmacist was legally prohibited from administering it to a child under the age of 3, I implore you to go further and amend this bill to include children as young as 2 years.

Jodie Heard

Self

Fort Worth, TX

Please vote "No" on this bill that allows flu shots to be given to 3 year olds. I have personally known people that had bad reactions to flu shots including a woman who went paralyzed from her waist down.

Deborah Yurco

self/ attorney

Austin, TX

Please protect children from medically unnecessary, often irreversible gender modification surgeries and procedures. I do vote and will follow the results of this HB.

Alicia Bell

Self

Kerrville, TX

My name is Alicia Bell, I represent myself and I am strongly OPPOSED to HB678

A pharmacist does not know the medical history or genetics of the child and is not trained in how to handle a vaccine injury or reaction and does not have any life-sustaining equipment. The pharmacist just injects the needle. The US Supreme Court ruled in 2011 that "Vaccines are unavoidably unsafe." With that said, the US Government, through the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (NVICP), has paid out more then \$4.5B to vaccine victims for injuries and deaths. Please oppose this bill.

Dee Martin

Self. Citizen of Texas

Cross Plains, TX

I implore you to vote a resounding "NO" to this evil. Children are not an experiment to satisfy the terrible whims and wishes of adults!