

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HB 2049

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH

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Hearing Date: April 14, 2021 8:00 AM

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Reyna Johnson

Self

Longview, TX

I believe a physician with a Doctorate of medicine should override a pharmacist especially in regards to surgery or suffering.

Jaime Barrera, Dr

Richard's Pharmacy

Mission, TX

I am writing to urge you to support House Bill 2049 in the House Public Health Committee. This important legislation would authorize pharmacists to furnish medications to patients who receive a positive result from a CLIA-waived test in a pharmacy for conditions such as influenza and strep throat under a physician protocol as determined by both the Texas Medical and Pharmacy Boards. Texas pharmacists are already permitted to perform CLIA-waived tests, such as those for flu and strep. However, we cannot furnish medication to treat these conditions should the patient receive a positive result. This creates an unnecessary delay in treatment and care for the patient, who must visit a physician, urgent care clinic, or emergency room to get a prescription. Especially with conditions like flu and strep throat, timely treatment is paramount to a quicker and healthier recovery. This legislation allows for the testing and treating to be completed during a single encounter, thereby increasing access to care, lowering costs, and improving health outcomes.

Jana Bennett

self, community pharmacist

Gordonville, TX

I am writing to urge you to support House Bill 2049 in the House Public Health Committee. This important legislation would authorize pharmacists to furnish medications to patients who receive a positive result from a CLIA-waived test in a pharmacy for conditions such as influenza and strep throat under a physician protocol as determined by both the Texas Medical and Pharmacy Boards. Texas pharmacists are already permitted to perform CLIA-waived tests, such as those for flu and strep. However, we cannot furnish medication to treat these conditions should the patient receive a positive result. This creates an unnecessary delay in treatment and care for the patient, who must visit a physician, urgent care clinic, or emergency room to get a prescription. Especially with conditions like flu and strep throat, timely treatment is paramount to a quicker and healthier recovery. This legislation allows for the testing and treating to be completed during a single encounter, thereby increasing access to care, lowering costs, and improving health outcomes. As a community pharmacist and owner of an independent pharmacy in Texas, I have been performing these tests for several years now. Providing this service to the people of my community is so very valuable. By doing so, I am able to quickly diagnose a patient with flu or strep, but am limited to only being able to offer them over the counter relief until their prescriber can be reached. Many times, the patient doesn't have a primary care physician nor do they have the money to go to the ER or an urgent care clinic. So, in the event of a positive test, we are stuck with a sick patient and no real avenue to help them. We have the protocols in place to treat them, just not the authority. I would think that with the current burden on all areas of the healthcare system, the help of a pharmacist to carry some of this load would be welcome by our physician colleagues.

Sharon Rush, R. Ph.

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Self, Pharmacist

Dripping Springs, TX

I am writing to urge you to support House Bill 2049 in the House Public Health Committee. This important legislation would authorize pharmacists to furnish medications to patients who receive a positive result from a CLIA-waived test in a pharmacy for conditions such as influenza and strep throat under a physician protocol as determined by both the Texas Medical and Pharmacy Boards. Texas pharmacists are already permitted to perform CLIA-waived tests, such as those for flu and strep. However, we cannot furnish medication to treat these conditions should the patient receive a positive result. This creates an unnecessary delay in treatment and care for the patient, who must visit a physician, urgent care clinic, or emergency room to get a prescription. Especially with conditions like flu and strep throat, timely treatment is paramount to a quicker and healthier recovery. This legislation allows for the testing and treating to be completed during a single encounter, thereby increasing access to care, lowering costs, and improving health outcomes.

As a long-standing community pharmacist, I frequently have patients come to me in the evening and weekend hours with influenza symptoms. Many do not have access to regular healthcare or a primary care physician. Many cannot afford a doctor's office fee or the minor emergency clinic fees. We are already trained to recognize influenza symptoms through our immunization courses and we have a standardized training course through the National Association of Chain Drug Stores on how to conduct different types of screenings, including collecting the recommended nasopharyngeal specimens outlined by the Infectious Diseases Society of America. This organization has detailed diagnostic and treatment guidelines for influenza. With the correct protocols and screening forms in place, these guidelines can easily be carried out effectively and accurately in a pharmacy environment. During a busy flu season, this will help relieve the burden on emergency rooms and primary care physician offices and allow them to take care of critical patients that need more specialized care.

Please take the time to consider this bill and allow the pharmacy profession to help protect the public during this critical and often overwhelming time.

Thank you,  
Sharon Rush

Kacey Blackerby, Pharm. D.

Leonard Pharmacy

Leonard, TX

I am writing to urge you to support House Bill 2049 in the House Public Health Committee. This important legislation would authorize pharmacists to furnish medications to patients who receive a positive result from a CLIA-waived test in a pharmacy for conditions such as influenza and strep throat under a physician protocol as determined by both the Texas Medical and Pharmacy Boards. Texas pharmacists are already permitted to perform CLIA-waived tests, such as those for flu and strep. However, we cannot furnish medication to treat these conditions should the patient receive a positive result. This creates an unnecessary delay in treatment and care for the patient, who must visit a physician, urgent care clinic, or emergency room to get a prescription. Especially with conditions like flu and strep throat, timely treatment is paramount to a quicker and healthier recovery. This legislation allows for the testing and treating to be completed during a single encounter, thereby increasing access to care, lowering costs, and improving health outcomes.

RAYMOND CARVAJAL, PHARMACIST

CARVAJAL PHARMACY

SAN ANTONIO, TX

As a Pharmacist of an independent pharmacy located in an underserved community, I am writing to urge you to support House Bill 2049 in the House Public Health Committee. This important legislation would authorize pharmacists to furnish medications to patients who receive a positive result from a CLIA-waived test in a pharmacy for conditions such as influenza and strep throat under a physician protocol as determined by both the Texas Medical and Pharmacy Boards. Texas pharmacists are already permitted to perform CLIA-waived tests, such as those for flu and strep. However, we cannot furnish medication to treat these

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conditions should the patient receive a positive result. This creates an unnecessary delay in treatment and care for the patient, who must visit a physician, urgent care clinic, or emergency room to get a prescription. Especially with conditions like flu and strep throat, timely treatment is paramount to a quicker and healthier recovery. This legislation allows for the testing and treating to be completed during a single encounter, thereby increasing access to care, lowering costs, and improving health outcomes. Your consideration to support House Bill 2049 in the House Public Health Committee is much appreciated.

Pamela Ellington, CPhT

Carvajal Pharmacy

San Antonio, TX

This would be a tremendous benefit for the underserved communities, therefore, I urge you to consider supporting House Bill 2049 in the House Public Health Committee. This important legislation would authorize pharmacists to furnish medications to patients who receive a positive result from a CLIA-waived test in a pharmacy for conditions such as influenza and strep throat under a physician protocol as determined by both the Texas Medical and Pharmacy Boards. Texas pharmacists are already permitted to perform CLIA-waived tests, such as those for flu and strep. However, we cannot furnish medication to treat these conditions should the patient receive a positive result. This creates an unnecessary delay in treatment and care for the patient, who must visit a physician, urgent care clinic, or emergency room to get a prescription. Especially with conditions like flu and strep throat, timely treatment is paramount to a quicker and healthier recovery. This legislation allows for the testing and treating to be completed during a single encounter, thereby increasing access to care, lowering costs, and improving health outcomes. Thank you for your consideration of supporting House Bill 2049.

Cassidy Heath

self- Pharmacist

San Antonio, TX

am writing to urge you to support House Bill 2049 in the House Public Health Committee. This important legislation would authorize pharmacists to furnish medications to patients who receive a positive result from a CLIA-waived test in a pharmacy for conditions such as influenza and strep throat under a physician protocol as determined by both the Texas Medical and Pharmacy Boards. Texas pharmacists are already permitted to perform CLIA-waived tests, such as those for flu and strep. However, we cannot furnish medication to treat these conditions should the patient receive a positive result. This creates an unnecessary delay in treatment and care for the patient, who must visit a physician, urgent care clinic, or emergency room to get a prescription. Especially with conditions like flu and strep throat, timely treatment is paramount to a quicker and healthier recovery. This legislation allows for the testing and treating to be completed during a single encounter, thereby increasing access to care, lowering costs, and improving health outcomes.

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 for various ailments. Despite being objectively the best prepared prescribers of all graduating health professionals, PharmD graduates are not generally allowed to prescribe medications...even for previously diagnosed or easy-to-diagnose conditions for which extremely safe and effective medications are available. However, evidence clearly demonstrates pharmacists can improve health outcomes for patients when they are allowed to directly furnish medications for these types of conditions. For example, allowing pharmacists to furnish naloxone for opioid overdose prevention has been shown to decrease state-level overdose rates. This bill would allow pharmacists to immediately offer FDA-approved medications to treat a narrow range of objectively diagnosed and easily treated ailments (e.g. influenza, strep throat). 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.

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Kathy Turner  
self, retired  
McGregor, TX

I oppose this bill, as pharmacists should not treat disease. The pharmacist does not have access to the patient's medical record, and lacks the training of a physician. And there are malpractice issues and the risk of undue influence from the pharmaceutical industry.