



## **The Ohio Society of Health-System Pharmacy**

To: The Ohio Senate Health Committee

SB144: Proponent Testimony

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### **To: The Ohio Senate Health Committee**

Dear Chairman Huffman, Vice Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and esteemed members of the Senate Health Committee. I stand before you today on behalf of the Ohio Society of Health-System Pharmacy, an organization representing hundreds of pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians. We would like to express our collective gratitude for the opportunity to share our support for Senate Bill 144, a critical piece of legislation that is poised to enhance the accessibility of vaccines for all Ohioans, especially those in medically underserved rural and urban areas.

In the continued fight against infectious diseases, SB144 will play a pivotal role. By reinstating provisions that proved to be crucial during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, SB144 provides a solution that will help bridge gaps in vaccine access, improve patient outcomes, and reduce healthcare costs for patients and their families.

There are a few main reasons why we believe that SB144 will accomplish these goals:

- 1. Pharmacy technicians are well-qualified:** Registered and Certified pharmacy technicians are skilled and vital members of the healthcare team. Technicians are relied upon across Ohio to perform sterile compounding, accept new prescriptions and a variety of other patient care related activities. Their role in vaccination administration under pharmacist supervision is a logical extension of their capabilities and has already been demonstrated to be effective during the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- 2. Pharmacies are accessible:** A pharmacy can be found within 5 miles of every US household; they are open evenings and weekends, and they offer convenient healthcare services such as vaccinations at a significantly lower cost than physician offices.
- 3. Pharmacies link patients to additional care:** Pharmacies already communicate with primary care providers when they administer vaccines. Unfortunately, many Ohioans do not currently have a primary care provider. SB144 will ensure that patients who lack a

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primary care provider still have access to vaccines while reinforcing the importance of well-child visits and linking patients to additional care when appropriate.

- 4. Pharmacists, interns, and nurses need additional support:** Allowing qualified individuals like pharmacy technicians to join the immunization team will also help to reduce the staffing burden associated with a heavy demand for vaccinations.
- 5. This is not unique to Ohio:** In passing SB144, Ohio would be following the lead of neighboring states like Kentucky, Michigan, and West Virginia by ensuring and improving access to vaccinations at pharmacies across the state.

In summary, The Ohio Society of Health-System Pharmacy urges the Senate Health Committee to recognize the contributions of pharmacy technicians and the positive impact that SB144 will have in our communities.

Thank you for your commitment to your constituents, our patients, and the advancement of public health.

Sincerely,

*Daniel Arendt*

Daniel Arendt Pharm.D., BCPS

Legislative Affairs Director: The Ohio Society of Health-System Pharmacy