

June 18, 2020

The Honorable Herb Conaway, Chairman  
The Honorable Angelica Jimenez, Vice-Chairwoman  
Assembly Committee on Health  
Committee Room 11, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, State House Annex  
Trenton, NJ 08608

**RE: NATIONAL COMMUNITY PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION SUPPORT OF S 2436**

Dear Assemblyman Conaway and Assemblywoman Jimenez,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) in support of S 2436. This legislation will allow pharmacists to order and administer CLIA-waived coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) tests that have been authorized by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA). In addition, S 2436 requires health benefits plans and Medicaid to provide coverage for the tests, alleviating a barrier for patients looking to get tested.

NCPA represents the interest of America's community pharmacists, including the owners of more than 21,000 independent community pharmacies across the United States and 801 independent community pharmacies in New Jersey. These New Jersey pharmacies filled more than 47 million prescriptions last year, impacting the lives of millions of patients in your state. Our members are small business owners who are among America's most accessible healthcare providers and they provide an expanding set of health care services to millions of patients every day.

The COVID-19 pandemic has claimed over 100,000 (11,000+ in New Jersey) lives and it continues to present a real threat to the citizens of New Jersey. With patient concern at an all time high, S 2436 will enhance patient access to pharmacist-provided COVID-19 tests by granting authority to pharmacists to order and administer COVID-19 tests. Ninety-one percent (91%) of Americans live within five miles of a community pharmacy.<sup>1</sup> More than any other segment of the pharmacy industry, independent community pharmacists are often located in underserved rural and urban areas. They are the most accessible healthcare providers in many communities and are critical for the expansion of testing statewide and eventually to furnish mass vaccination to New Jerseyans once available.

NCPA applauds the Medicaid provision that will provide compensation to pharmacists for delivered care. According to this provision, compensation will only occur *during the Public Health Emergency and State of Emergency declared by the Governor in Executive Order 103 of 2020* at which point compensation may cease. NCPA recommends language be included to extend compensation well after the emergency and beyond to ensure new cases are detected on time to maintain low transmission rates and evade unwanted resurgence of the disease.

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<sup>1</sup> NCPDP Pharmacy File, ArcGIS Census Tract File, NACDS Economics Department.

NCPA appreciates the opportunity to provide a letter of support for S 2436 which authorizes pharmacists to order and administer COVID-19 tests and allows patients to obtain coverage for those tests. Frontline independent community pharmacists continue to help in their authorized capacity, and they remain well-positioned to play an essential role to expand testing statewide and provide mass vaccination to New Jerseyans once available. NCPA urges you to support this common sense legislation for the safety and well being of all New Jerseyans. Thank you for your time and consideration, please do not hesitate to contact me at [ademola.are@ncpa.org](mailto:ademola.are@ncpa.org) or (703) 600-1179 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ademola Are". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A".

Ademola Are  
Manager, State Government Affairs  
National Community Pharmacists Association

CC: The Honorable John Armato, Dan Benson, Jamal Holley, Angela McKnight, Nancy Pinkin, Nancy Munoz, Erik Peterson, Brian Rumpf, Holly Schepisi