

February 28, 2023

The Honorable James J. Maroney
The Honorable Michael D’Augustino
Co-Chairman, Joint Committee on General Law
Legislative Office Building
Room 3500
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 6768 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION’S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PRESCRIPTION DRUG REGULATION

Co-Chairmen Maroney, D’Augustino and members of the committee:

We thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for **HOUSE BILL 6768**, a bill that expands pharmacists’ authorities to independently prescribe FDA-approved hormonal and emergency contraceptives along with certain devices. We **support** this bill as it expands access to contraception, improves public health and reduces costs associated with unintended pregnancies. We applaud the additional provisions within in the bill such as the legal protections for pharmacists dispensing pregnancy termination drugs and the revision of compounding statutes.

NCPA represents the interest of America’s community pharmacists, including the owners of more than 19,400 independent community pharmacies across the United States and 123 independent community pharmacies in Connecticut. These Connecticut pharmacies filled over 7 million prescriptions last year, impacting thousands 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.

Over 90% of Americans live within five miles of a community pharmacy¹. More than any other segment of the pharmacy industry, independent community pharmacists are often located in the most underserved rural and urban areas and are frequently the most accessible healthcare providers in many communities and are critical for the provision of immunizations and other preventative care service in the community. Pharmacists are uniquely positioned to reach patients who may not have an affordable or accessible way to obtain contraception. The best way to improve contraceptive care and access is to involves all providers practicing at the top of their license.

¹ NCPDP Pharmacy File, ArcGIS Census Tract File, NACDS Economics Department.

Currently, 20 states have authorized pharmacists to prescribe hormonal contraceptives. In Oregon, this authorization helped the state avert an estimated 51 unintended pregnancies and save \$1.6 million in the first year of implementation.² As 45% of pregnancies in the United States are unintended, this expanded access to contraception is critical.³

NCPA supports the Connecticut Pharmacists Association in their advocacy in this bill. We appreciate the General Law Committee's attention to this important issue and urge approval from the committee members.

Sincerely,



Belawoe Akwakoku
State Government Affairs Manager
National Community Pharmacists Association

² Anderson L, et.al. Pharmacist Provision of Hormonal Contraception in the Oregon Medicaid Population. *Obstet Gynecol.* 2019;133(6):1231-1237. doi: 10.1097/AOG.0000000000003286.

³<https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/contraception/unintendedpregnancy/index.htm#:~:text=In%202008%2C%20women%20reported%20that,higher%20rates%20of%20unintended%20pregnancy.>