

April 18, 2023

The Honorable Stephanie Klick, Chairwoman  
The Honorable Liz Campos, Vice Chairwoman  
Texas House of Representatives  
House Committee on Public Health  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, TX 78768

**RE: HOUSE BILL 2079 – AN ACT RELATING TO THE AUTHORITY OF PHARMACISTS TO ORDER AND FURNISH CERTAIN PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

Chairwoman Klick, Vice Chairwoman Campos and members of the committee:

I am writing to you on behalf of the National Community Pharmacy Association (NCPA) in **support** of **HOUSE BILL 2079**, a bill that expands pharmacists' scope of practice to prescribe medications pursuant to a Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) waived tests. Approval of this proposed legislation will permit pharmacists to administer, read and report these tests and treat conditions for influenza, COVID-19, strep and other minor illnesses.

NCPA represents the interest of America's community pharmacists, including owner of more than 19,400 independent community pharmacies across the United States and 1,487 independent community pharmacies in Texas. These pharmacies filled over 94 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 pharmacy<sup>1</sup> and more than any other segment of the pharmacy industry, independent community pharmacies are often located in underserved rural and urban areas. Pharmacists are trained in providing services outside of dispensing medications like medication therapy management, managing chronic disease and performing health and wellness testing. This legislation permits pharmacists to perform tests to initiate treatment of illnesses (i.e., influenza or COVID-19 test and treat) and other acute conditions. Allowing pharmacies to perform these services allows them to minimize the long-term costs that can compound when a disease is not recognized and treated in a timely manner. Frontline community pharmacies have played an outsized

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

role in combating the COVID-19 pandemic and remain well-positioned to play an essential role in the expansion of testing and treatment of minor infections.

NCPA supports the Texas Pharmacy Association in their advocacy for this bill. We appreciate the Public Health Committee's attention to this critical issue and urge approval from the committee members.

Thank you for your time and consideration and please do not hesitate to contact me at [Belawoe.akwakoku@ncpa.org](mailto:Belawoe.akwakoku@ncpa.org) or (703) 600- 1179 should have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Belawoe Akwakoku". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Belawoe Akwakoku  
Manager, State Government Affairs Manager  
National Community Pharmacists Association