



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHAIN DRUG STORES

March 28, 2022

The Honorable Paul J. Utke, Chairman
The Honorable Rich Draheim, Vice Chair
The Honorable Melissa H. Wiklund, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services Finance and Policy

Via email: bailey.strand@senate.mn

Re: Support SF 3940; Patient Continued Access to Vaccinations at Community Pharmacies

Dear Chairman Utke, Vice Chair Draheim and Ranking Member Wiklund:

On behalf of our seventeen member companies operating nearly 900 pharmacies in Minnesota, the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) appreciates the opportunity to express our support for SF 3940. The bill would continue to allow Minnesotans convenient, local access to vaccines and testing they have widely taken advantage of during the current Public Health Emergency (PHE) under the Federal PREP Act. We applaud the Committee for recognizing the valuable impact in making these services permanently available to your constituents and thank Senator Duckworth for sponsoring this bill.

Early this month, a Morning Consult [poll](#) commissioned by NACDS, surveyed Americans regarding the set of national policies that were put into place to allow pharmacists and pharmacy teams to provide pandemic-related services. The results found that: **70% support extending these policies and 68% support making these policies permanent.** Those who received a COVID-19 vaccination from a pharmacy are even more supportive. Among those who received their COVID-19 booster at a pharmacy: **85% support extending these policies and 84% support making these policies permanent.**

SF 3940 aligns with the overwhelming public support demonstrated by the poll. As proposed to be amended, this bill would allow:

- pharmacists to order COVID-19 and other simple rapid result point-of-care tests for patients. Minnesota statute already allows pharmacists to perform these tests and the PREP Act gave pharmacists the authority to order them. The addition of the word “order” simply makes state law consistent with the PREP Act and closes a loophole that will be a coverage barrier to patients seeking these tests after the federal Public Health Emergency expires.
- Pharmacy technicians that have completed accredited immunization training to continue to immunize patients under the supervision of the pharmacist after the PHE expires.
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It is important to keep in mind that trained Minnesota pharmacies have a proven track record of safely providing simple point-of-care rapid testing and vaccines to your constituents. The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly demonstrated that patient access to care at community pharmacies was critical and necessary. To keep up with demand, Minnesota’s pharmacies quickly pivoted and invested in immunization training programs for technicians. In doing so, pharmacy technicians’ role in combatting the pandemic was critical. Consider that pharmacies have given more than 230 million vaccines during the pandemic and that a substantial portion of these were administered by technicians. Without these

efforts, it would have been extremely difficult for pharmacies to meet the COVID challenge, especially in underserved rural areas. Maintaining this authority is essential to Minnesota's healthcare workforce and patient access.

NACDS and our member pharmacies thank the committee for considering SF3940. Now is the time to permanently recognize the full skillset of trained pharmacists and technicians to deliver patient care while supporting the larger healthcare system. Pharmacies have proven repeatedly that they have the ability to bring accessible and convenient healthcare into your communities. If we can provide further assistance, please contact NACDS' [Jill McCormack](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven C. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Steven C. Anderson, FASAE, CAE, IOM
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Chain Drug Stores