



December 1, 2022

We are writing in support of H.R. 7213, "The Equitable Community Access to Pharmacist Services Act" (ECAPS). If passed, Medicare patients would be permitted to receive prompt and dependable pharmacy care for pandemic-related medical needs. Pharmacists would be equipped to address current and potential national public health risks. This bill addresses current restrictions and ensures that patients can continue to access essential care and services provided by pharmacists, the most dependable and approachable healthcare providers on whom communities have come to rely.

As of February 9, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control published that pharmacists have administered 229 million COVID-19 vaccine doses. This bill emphasizes the importance of pharmacist services related to the pandemic and other illnesses, including testing, treatment, and vaccinations for COVID-19, influenza, respiratory syncytial virus, and strep throat. So often in our rural state of West Virginia, pharmacies are the first stop, even before doctor's offices, for healthcare needs. This legislation will ensure that patients in our rural communities will continue to receive the services they are currently being provided, improving the gaps in patient care.

An emerging public health issue that the pandemic has intensified is the issue of healthcare deserts or places where basic healthcare is not easily accessible. In West Virginia, the beautiful meandering yet rural mountains make it especially difficult for those seeking care to gain access. In addition, West Virginia has limited public transportation with an aging population. Due to the aging population, the need for healthcare has increased, and our physicians have become overtaxed by the demand for services - creating a primary care crisis. Pharmacies are often closer than the physician's office to these patients in need, and pharmacists already have the training and ability to provide healthcare services. We, as pharmacists, are ready and able to take care of West Virginians.

We ask that you support H.R. 7213, "The Equitable Community Access to Pharmacist Services Act," a solution that will continue patient access to impactful services and care pharmacists provide. Many federal legislators from both sides have currently signed to support, and we would like for you to sign in support. In supporting this bill, you will positively impact West Virginians and Americans who depend on their pharmacists.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Matthew M. Rafa, PharmD
President, West Virginia Pharmacists Association

Tyler Clay, PharmD
President-Elect, West Virginia Pharmacists Association

Krista Capehart, PharmD
Secretary, West Virginia Pharmacists Association

CK Babcock, PharmD
Treasurer, West Virginia Pharmacists Association

Aubrey Lemasters, PharmD
Employed Pharmacy Director, West Virginia Pharmacists Association

Michael LeMasters, PharmD
Independent Pharmacy Director, West Virginia Pharmacists Association

Randall Johnson, PharmD
Institutional Pharmacy Director, West Virginia Pharmacists Association

Christine Barrett, PharmD
Director-at-Large, West Virginia Pharmacists Association

Drew Massey, PharmD
Director-at-Large, West Virginia Pharmacists Association

Katie Kacmarik, PharmD
Past President, West Virginia Pharmacists Association

Yohanna Berhanu
Matthew Ballard
James Mills
Student Representatives, West Virginia Pharmacists Association

William Petros, PharmD, FCCP
Kristy Lucas, PharmD, FCCP, CTTS
Eric Blough, PhD
Deans of Schools of Pharmacy, West Virginia Pharmacists Association