

Dear Chairwoman Cleveland and members of the Senate Health and Long-Term Care Committee,

My name is Dakota Fletcher, and I am a constituent of Legislative District 46. I am writing to respectfully request that SB 5924, companion to HB 2145, be scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Health & Long-Term Care Committee.

SB 5924 is a bipartisan bill that expands prescriptive authority for pharmacists to improve patient access to care in the face of ongoing healthcare workforce shortages, rising costs, access barriers, and systemic strain. As a third-year Doctor of Pharmacy student at the University of Washington, I strongly support this legislation because it allows pharmacists to practice at the top of their education and training in service of patient safety and access.

SB 5924 ensures that pharmacists have the tools necessary to be a resource for patients and their communities during these uncertain times. It reduces the burdens placed on physicians and other providers while streamlining team-based care. This bill is modeled after other laws in Idaho and Montana that were ironically modeled after Washington State clinical pharmacy practice.

Through my pharmacy education and clinical experiences, I am receiving extensive training in pharmacotherapy, patient assessment, chronic disease management, and interprofessional collaboration. I personally had the opportunity to work as an intern at an independent community pharmacy where we are often the most accessible healthcare providers for patients, particularly those with low income. I've also completed rotations in a clinic setting serving Veterans, in emergency rooms and ICUs, and working on interdisciplinary teams serving people with unstable housing via the UW/Harborview Mobile Health Unit. In all of these settings, pharmacists are providing direct patient care and managing chronic disease states, which demonstrates how pharmacists are prepared to safely and effectively provide expanded services, including independent prescribing.

Given the demonstrated value pharmacists bring to patient care and public health, I respectfully urge you, as Chair of the Senate Health & Long-Term Care Committee, to allow SB 5924 to receive a hearing. We urge your support of pharmacists as part of the health care team in hospitals, clinics, behavioral health, long term care, and community settings. Pharmacists stand ready to help our community and patients.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dakota Fletcher (he/him)