

**Statement Before
Public Health
Tuesday, February 16, 2016**

R.B. 5129: An Act Concerning The Administration of Vaccines by Pharmacists and Medical Assistants and the Listing of Certified Medical Assistants

Good Afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Marghie Giuliano and I am both a pharmacist and the Executive Vice President of the Connecticut Pharmacists Association. The Connecticut Pharmacists Association is a professional organization representing 800 pharmacists in the State of Connecticut. I am testifying on Raised Bill 5129: *An Act Concerning The Administration of Vaccines by Pharmacists and Medical Assistants and the Listing of Certified Medical Assistants*

This legislation would expand the role of pharmacists to administer the flu vaccine to any person under the age of eighteen. Currently pharmacists, who are recognized as health care providers in the State of Connecticut, can administer any adult vaccine that is in accordance with the CDC's list of approved immunizations. We support this language.

As health care providers and the medication experts who currently spend 6 years earning a doctorate degree, pharmacists are competent and able to handle this expansion of patient care. As we state above, it is interesting to note that as of today, despite these advanced degree and this role as key health care providers, pharmacists have only been allowed to vaccinate ADULTS and only for the vaccines listed on the CDC schedule.

With the pharmacist's focus on medication, we appreciate the irony of pharmacists, as health care providers, having a limited scope of practice, where they can only administer to adults currently, yet this committee would entertain allowing medical assistants with 6 months of education to be able to administer **all** vaccines to patients of **all ages, including infants**.

We find Section 2, which would allow medical assistants to provide any vaccine to a patient as long as they are under the direct supervision of a physician, to be extremely problematic. The education of medical assistants varies, with an average program length from 12 to 24 months focusing on general coursework such as anatomy & physiology, billing, insurance and coding, as well as diagnostic and laboratory procedures, and not clinical knowledge. This language requires direct supervision from a physician, a physician's assistant, or APRN while the vaccine is being administered. Does this mean in the same office? In the same room? And if so, why wouldn't the supervising individual just administer the vaccine themselves?

For the reasons stated above, the CPA opposes Section 2 of this proposed legislation and encourages the Public Health Committee to reserve the vaccination authority for physicians, nurses and pharmacists.