NPSC
STRONGER TOGETHER

General Law Committee
Connecticut General Assembly

House Bill 5077, AN ACT CONCERNING THE RETURN OF UNUSED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS TO PHARMACIES

February 7, 2017

Representative Baram, Senator Leone, Senator Witkos, and Distinguished Members:

I would like to thank you for bringing this important matter to this forum. I am here to testify in strong opposition to House Bill 5077. My name is David Benoit. I am a pharmacist and for over twenty years, I have worked in the business of independent community pharmacy at Northeast Pharmacy Service Corporation, a group purchasing organization. Currently, there are approximately 280 Participating Pharmacies.

House Bill 5077 would be a sharp departure from longstanding public policy. With so many other options available for the safe disposal of unused pharmaceuticals, the wisdom of current policy must be clearly shown to be significantly lacking in the interests of the public before any change such as this occurs.

Pharmacies are the endpoint of the secure drug distribution system. Bringing unused products back in to pharmacies risks re-distribution of products that have not been properly stored and handled. The DEA has a very strong position against the re-introduction of any controlled substances to pharmacies. Thirdly and at a minimum, the cost of such a program would be easily beyond $1000 per year.

More importantly, there have been other options which are expanding. Community pharmacies in concert with the state are distributing drug disposal pouches to consumers for the disposal of unused and unwanted drugs. These pouches have been free to consumers.

A growing number of police departments participate in the National Drug Takeback Program, which operates under the DEAs purview. Once again, these programs do not occur in pharmacies under the DEA's rules. In many communities, this program has expanded to drop boxes which are accessible 24 hours per day, seven days per week at the local police or fire department.

We advocate for a safe and secure drug supply. That is why we oppose pharmaceutical returns in community pharmacies. We also advocate for the disposal of unused and unwanted medications, which is why we call for expanded disposal sites in each and every community.

David Benoit, MHP, RPh
VP, Patient Care Services
Northeast Pharmacy Service Corporation