



**Testimony Before the Public Health Committee  
In Support of SB 94 AN ACT ALLOWING PHARMACISTS TO ADMINISTER THE INFLUENZA VACCINE TO  
CHILDREN TWELVE YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER.**

**Carrie Rand-Anastasiades**

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Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg, Senator Lesser, Representative Young, Senator Somers, Representative Petit and members of the Public Health Committee: my name is Carrie Rand-Anastasiades, and I am the Executive Director of the CT Association of Community Pharmacies. We are an association representing large pharmacies such as Walgreens, Rite-Aid, Stop & Shop and Big Y to name a few. Our organization would like to expand whom pharmacists are allowed to immunize. Currently pharmacists are allowed to vaccinate adults with all CDC-approved vaccines. SB 94 would increase access to life-saving vaccinations by allowing pharmacists to administer influenza vaccinations to children aged 12 and older.

Pharmacists have been safely providing immunizations to adults in the state for many years. Very simply, this legislation offers parents another option—one that is both very convenient and safe—for flu vaccine access for their children, to complement the efforts of the state’s physicians. With thousands of pharmacists already trained and licensed to administer immunizations working in the state, community pharmacies are ready and willing to be part of the solution to drive up vaccination rates. Pharmacies are uniquely positioned to raise flu immunization rates among children. We offer busy working families a convenient option. Many of our pharmacies are open 24 hours, in the evenings, before school and on weekends. We are also a particularly important source of healthcare services in rural areas of the state. Influenza is the only vaccine that everyone six months and older is recommended to get each year; therefore, parents need every opportunity to get their children vaccinated, and it must fit into their busy lives.

Action by the US Department of Defense lends evidence to the value and quality of community pharmacy immunizations. In 2009, TRICARE, the health insurance program for military personnel and their beneficiaries, began covering flu immunizations given by a pharmacist—without copay—or both adults and children. The policy was such a success in raising immunization rates and saving costs, that two years later they published a final rule extending it to cover all CDC-recommended vaccines. The text of final rule states, “the value of vaccines lies in the prevention of disease and reduced healthcare costs in the long term. Vaccines . . . save billions of dollars in health care costs annually. When vaccines are more readily accessible, a broader section of the population will receive them.”

In short, pharmacists are ready, willing and able to safely increase access to life-saving flu immunizations for the children of Connecticut. We ask that you please allow Connecticut parents that option, available in many other states, by voting in favor of SB 94. Thank you in advance for your consideration.