



Senator Abrams and Representative Steinberg and the Public Health Committee,

We are here today to testify in support of Raised Bill No. 94 which relates to the administration of vaccines by pharmacists. The bill would allow pharmacists to provide the influenza vaccine to children 12 years of age and older.

Pharmacists are highly trained health care professionals and have been giving immunizations to adults in the state of Connecticut for many years. In 2018, Stop & Shop Pharmacies administered over 40,000 influenza immunizations in the State of Connecticut alone. Flu immunization rates for teens are not as high as younger children and pharmacies are uniquely positioned in the community to offer families a convenient and safe option to have their teens immunized. In fact, as convenience and accessibility are factors which influence influenza immunization rates, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends "expanding access through use of non-traditional settings for vaccinations, such as pharmacies, to reach individuals who may not visit a traditional physician's office during the flu season." Pharmacists are our country's most accessible healthcare providers and are uniquely positioned to affect public health.

Stop & Shop Pharmacists currently administer influenza immunizations to children as low as age two in New York, age nine in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and age 12 in New Jersey. We encourage Connecticut to join the growing number of states which allow pharmacists to administer influenza immunizations to individuals in this age group.

Reference Websites:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/fluview/coverage-1415estimates.htm>

<http://www.aappublications.org/news/2018/12/14/flu vaccine121418>