

## **Testimony of the Board of Pharmacy**

**Before the  
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce  
Wednesday, February 8, 2024  
2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 329 and Videoconference**

**On the following measure:  
H. B. 2553, H.D. 1, RELATING TO PHARMACISTS**

Chair Nakashima and Members of the Committee:

My name is James Skizewski, and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Pharmacy (Board). The Board voted unanimously in support of this bill.

The purposes of this bill are to authorize: (1) licensed pharmacists to administer vaccines to persons three years of age or older; (2) pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen, if certain requirements are met; and (3) licensed pharmacists to order vaccines for administration to persons between the ages of three and seventeen.

The Board would like to emphasize the challenges the State currently faces regarding the shortage of healthcare providers, especially in rural areas and the neighbor islands. Pharmacies are geographically dispersed throughout the community with extended hours of operation, making access to health care provided through pharmacies readily available for patients in each locality. Patients have established relationships of trust with and recognize pharmacists as healthcare professionals. This measure will aid in the development of access to quality health care across the State, most importantly, in underserved rural areas of Hawaii.

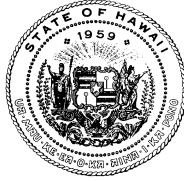
In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) expanded authority to pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians. Pharmacists and properly trained staff aided in administering COVID-19 tests and vaccines in pharmacies across the State, safely expanding patient access to health care. This bill will address the expiration of the PREP Act (December 2024) by similarly allowing pharmacists, properly trained pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians to continue to administer vaccines to

those three (3) years old and above. The measure will guarantee that pharmacies and staff can continue to provide the public with access to quality health services in a manner which has proven fruitful in recent years. Furthermore, the allowance for pharmacists to order vaccinations for those three (3) years old and above will aid the State in meeting the rising demand for immunizations.

The Board acknowledges and appreciates the inclusion of a minimum of two credit hours in immunization-related continuing education courses during each licensing biennium. This requirement will ensure vaccines are properly administered even as new techniques and methods are developed. Additionally, the included required certificate of basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and patient vaccination history review will further safeguard the public from possible adverse effects.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII  
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII



KENNETH S. FINK, M.D., M.G.A, M.P.H  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH  
KA LUNA HŌOKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of H.B. 2553 H.D. 1  
RELATING TO PHARMACISTS**

REPRESENTATIVE MARK N. NAKASHIMA, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

1 Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: 2/8/24, 2:00 PM, ROOM 329

2 **Fiscal Implications:** No fiscal implications determined for the Department of Health.

3 **Department Position:** The Department supports this measure and offers comments.

4 **Department Testimony:** The Disease Outbreak Control Division (DOCD) provides the following  
5 testimony on behalf of the Department.

6 According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, vaccination coverage  
7 among Hawaii Kindergarteners for routinely recommended childhood vaccines (e.g., measles,  
8 mumps, and rubella; diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis; polio; etc.) has declined by nearly ten  
9 percentage points between the period of 2017 – 2022 and remains below the U.S. national  
10 average. In the effort to ensure continued expanded access to immunizations in settings such  
11 as pharmacies, HDOH/DOCD supports incorporation of federal PREP Act authorizations in  
12 Hawaii statute. As demonstrated during the COVID-19 public health emergency, pharmacies'  
13 ability to conduct mobile/off-site vaccination clinics for seasonal vaccines such as influenza and  
14 COVID-19 also ensure continued options for school-located vaccination clinics.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce  
Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Bonnie Irwin, Chancellor

and

Rae Matsumoto, Dean

Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy

University of Hawai'i at Hilo

#### HB 2553 HD1 – RELATING TO PHARMACISTS

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2553 HD1. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) feels strongly that an appropriate regulatory scheme is currently in place in the State for pharmacy interns to provide vaccinations as proposed in HB 2553 HD1.

Following is a summary of information which we feel supports this:

1. Applications for pharmacy intern permits are reviewed and approved by the Board of Pharmacy.
2. Pharmacy intern permits are granted to pharmacy students or graduates of an American Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE)-accredited pharmacy school, who meet eligibility requirements set forth by the BOP. There are also specific requirements for foreign-educated pharmacy graduates. ([Require-Instruct-App-for-Pharmacy-Intern\\_04.21R.pdf \(hawaii.gov\)](#))
3. Pharmacy interns associated with the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP) at the UH Hilo are required to earn a nationally recognized immunization certification (same one that licensed pharmacists earn) in order to vaccinate. This certification is available to all pharmacy interns in the US.
4. Pharmacy interns are required to be supervised by a licensed pharmacist when they are performing services, such as vaccinations. This is covered in the Hawai'i Administrative Rules of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs 16-95-85 (scope of practice of a pharmacy intern) and 16-95-79 (supervision by a registered pharmacist) which both specify that pharmacy interns shall at all times be under the immediate supervision of a licensed or registered pharmacist.

5. Current practice in the DKICP limits a maximum of two pharmacy interns being supervised by a licensed pharmacist at a given time. This 2:1 intern to pharmacist ratio is compliant with Hawai'i state and federal laws, and accreditation standards for pharmacy education.

The ability of pharmacy interns to vaccinate is essential for their professional development and future employment. Most pharmacies in the US expect contemporary pharmacy graduates to be able to vaccinate from their first day of employment, thereby making the ability to master this expertise as a pharmacy intern essential for positioning our graduates for future employment.

Pharmacy interns in Hawai'i and across the nation routinely perform vaccinations when they are on clinical rotations for their pharmacy practice experiences, and as part of community outreach activities. During the pandemic, pharmacy interns were integral to the effort to get the public vaccinated and the workflow for many pharmacies now depend on pharmacy interns to help vaccinate patients.

In summary, regulatory schemes and practices are already in place to support the ability of pharmacy interns to safely and effectively vaccinate the public. The ability to continue these efforts is beneficial to both the people of Hawai'i, as well as to the career and professional development of pharmacy students who are trained in our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2553 HD1.



---

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024  
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION  
Hearing on Thursday, February 8, 2024 2:00PM  
**Testimony in Support for HB2553**

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection,

I am writing this letter to express my wholehearted support for Bill HB2553, which aims to adopt the provisions of the PREP Act to empower pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to administer routinely recommended vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and older. I believe that this step is crucial in enhancing access to vaccinations, particularly in areas or populations with limited access to pediatricians and primary-care providers.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians play a pivotal role in healthcare, and their contribution to public health has been evident, especially during the recent COVID19 pandemic when they administered the COVID19 vaccine to nearly a third of all adults receiving the vaccine. The convenience and extended hours offered by pharmacies make them a valuable resource for vaccination services. Additionally, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are trusted healthcare professionals with established relationships with their patients, ensuring a level of comfort and familiarity that is essential in healthcare practices.

The adoption of the PREP Act provisions allowing pharmacists to administer vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and above, as well as expanding the role of trained and Nationally Certified Pharmacy Technicians, is a logical and necessary step. In Hawaii, our community has relied on pharmacies, especially during the past three years of the pandemic, to provide essential vaccination services without the need for a prescription. With the discontinuation of flu vaccinations for school-aged children at their schools, community pharmacies are uniquely positioned to fill this void and ensure that every child receives the necessary vaccinations.

Continuing to empower pharmacies to administer vaccines to individuals aged 3 and above will not only sustain access but also optimize the healthcare community's potential to keep our community healthy. This is particularly crucial in areas where there are shortages of healthcare providers or where access to medical services is limited.

I urge you to consider the importance of Bill HB2553 and its potential positive impact on public health in Hawaii. By supporting this bill, we can enhance the reach of vaccination services and contribute to the overall well-being of our community. I appreciate your dedication to public health and your consideration of this matter.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Megan Arbles", written over a horizontal line.

Megan Arbles, Pharm D.  
Director of Pharmacy Operations  
KTA Super Stores

---

*You're Someone Special Every Day at KTA!*

**HB-2553-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 10:31:47 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alyssa Pang	Times Pharmacy	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024 COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION

Hearing on Thursday, February 8, 2024 2:00PM

Testimony in Support for HB2553

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

Our Pharmacist were actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,

Alyssa Pang



February 6, 2024

[submitted electronically via: [capitol.hawaii.gov](https://capitol.hawaii.gov)]

The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima  
Chair, Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
415 South Beretania Street  
Conference Room 329  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce:

The American Pharmacists Association (APhA) appreciates the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on [House Bill \(HB\) 2553](#) (Rep. Takenouchi). This bill will codify pharmacists' authority to administer and pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns under the supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccines to patients aged three years to seventeen. Pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns currently have this authority in Hawai'i due to federal Declarations under the federal Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act. However, some of the federal authorities under the PREP Act, particularly for pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns, expired on May 11, 2023, and other authorities will be expiring under the Eleventh Amendment in December 2024,<sup>1</sup> which will interrupt access for patients who have come to rely on pharmacy personnel to administer immunizations.

APhA is the largest association of pharmacists in the United States advancing the entire pharmacy profession, including 2,451 licensed pharmacists in Hawaii. APhA represents pharmacists in all practice settings, including community pharmacies, hospitals, long-term care facilities, specialty pharmacies, community health centers, physician offices, ambulatory clinics, managed care organizations, hospice settings, and government facilities. Our members strive to improve medication use, advance patient care, and enhance public health. APhA represents pharmacists, students, and pharmacy technicians who practice in numerous settings and provide care to many of your constituents. As the voice of pharmacy, APhA leads the profession and equips members for their role as the medication expert in team-based, patient-centered care. APhA inspires, innovates, and creates opportunities for members and pharmacists worldwide to optimize medication use and health for all.

Hawai'i pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns under the supervision of a pharmacist have been administering vaccines for the past several years after the U.S. Department of Health and Human

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Eleventh Amendment to Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19. Published March 12, 2023. Available at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/05/12/2023-10216/eleventh-amendment-to-declaration-under-the-public-readiness-and-emergency-preparedness-act-for>



Services (HHS) issued a declaration under the federal PREP Act for medical countermeasures against COVID-19<sup>2</sup> and then the Third,<sup>3</sup> Fourth,<sup>4</sup> Eighth,<sup>5</sup> and Tenth<sup>6</sup> Amendments. HHS' declarations and amendments authorized the following:

- Pharmacists (order and administer) and pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns under the supervision of a pharmacist, to administer to persons ages three or older COVID-19 vaccinations and seasonal influenza vaccines that have been authorized or licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- Pharmacists (order and administer) and pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns under the supervision of a pharmacist, to administer any vaccine that the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends to persons ages three through 18 according to ACIP's standard immunization schedule.

The federal authority under the PREP Act preempts state law and Hawai'iians have been receiving expanded access to vaccines provided by their local pharmacy personnel for nearly four years. While pharmacists (order and administer) and pharmacy technicians' and pharmacy interns' authority to administer to persons ages three or older COVID-19 vaccinations and seasonal influenza vaccines will continue until December 2024, pharmacy personnel's (interns' and technicians') authority to administer other ACIP-recommended vaccines to persons ages three through 18 ended on May 11, 2023. HB2553 makes this temporary federal authority permanent in Hawai'i under pharmacists', pharmacy interns,' and pharmacy technicians' state scope of practice by maintaining access to vaccinations for patients aged three years or older. HB2553 is vital to minimize interruptions to patients' access to necessary vaccinations and ensure Hawai'i can meet its public health needs and save millions of lives and billions in preventable health care costs to Hawai'i.

For these reasons, APhA respectfully requests your "AYE" vote on HB2553. If you have any questions or require additional information or would like to meet with Hawai'i pharmacists, please don't hesitate to contact E. Michael Murphy, PharmD, MBA, APhA Advisor for State Government Affairs by email at [mmurphy@aphanet.org](mailto:mmurphy@aphanet.org).

Sincerely,



Michael Baxter  
Vice President, Federal and State Government Affairs

---

<sup>2</sup> HHS. Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19. Published March 17, 2020. Available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-03-17/pdf/2020-05484.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> HHS. Third Amendment to Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19. Published August 24, 2020. Available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-08-24/pdf/2020-18542.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> HHS. Fourth Amendment to the Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19 and Republication of the Declaration. Published December 9, 2020. Available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-12-09/pdf/2020-26977.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> HHS. Eighth Amendment to Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19. Published August 4, 2021. Available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-08-04/pdf/2021-16681.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> HHS. Tenth Amendment to Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19. Published January 7, 2022. Available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2022-01-07/pdf/2022-00151.pdf>.

cc: Representative Terez Amato  
Representative Nicole E. Lowen  
Representative Della Au Belatti  
Representative Richard H.K. Onishi  
Representative Mark J. Hashem  
Representative Adrian K. Tam  
Representative Natalia Hussey-Burdick  
Representative Elijah Pierick  
Representative Cedric Asuega Gates



February 6, 2024

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024  
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION

DATE: February 8, 2024

TIME: 2:00pm

RE: **Testimony in support of HB 2553**

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and esteemed members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection:

I write to wholeheartedly endorse Bill HB 2553, which seeks to adopt the provisions of the PREP Act, empowering pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to administer routine vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and above. This measure is pivotal in improving vaccination accessibility, particularly in areas or demographics facing limited access to pediatricians and primary-care providers.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians have played a critical role in healthcare, notably highlighted during the recent COVID-19 pandemic, where they administered vaccines to a significant portion of adults. The convenience and extended operating hours of pharmacies make them invaluable for vaccination services. Moreover, these professionals are trusted members of the healthcare community, fostering comfort and familiarity among patients.

Expanding the scope of pharmacists to administer vaccinations, alongside trained and Nationally Certified Pharmacy Technicians, is a logical progression. In Hawaii, pharmacies have been relied upon, especially during the pandemic, to provide essential vaccination services without the need for a prescription. With the discontinuation of flu vaccinations for school-aged children at their schools, community pharmacies are well-positioned to ensure every child receives necessary vaccinations.

Continued empowerment of pharmacies to administer vaccines to individuals aged 3 and above will not only sustain accessibility but also optimize the healthcare system's capacity to safeguard public health. This is particularly vital in regions with healthcare provider shortages or limited medical services access.

I urge you to recognize the significance of Bill HB 2553 and its potential to positively impact public health in Hawaii. Supporting this bill will expand vaccination service reach and contribute to our community's overall well-being. I commend your commitment to public health and appreciate your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Toby B. Taniguchi", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Toby B. Taniguchi  
President

Representative Mark Nakashima, Chair  
Representative Jackson Sayama, Vice Chair  
House Consumer Protection & Commerce Committee

February 8, 2024; 2:00 p.m  
Conference room 329

**RE: HB 2553 HD1 - Relating to Pharmacists – In Support, request amendments**

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee:

CVS Health is writing in support of HB 2553 HD1, which authorizes pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of the pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen, if certain requirements are met.

This bill is a positive step in providing increased and equitable access to vaccinations approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to pediatric patients. The increased access to vaccinations at pharmacies will support the patients of Hawaii by providing critical disease prevention.

We ask for your consideration in amending the bill to authorize pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to pediatric and adult patients, three years of age and older. Current statute only allows pharmacists to administer vaccinations to adults.

Pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians have demonstrated their clinical ability to safely order and administer vaccinations during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. HB 2553 HD1 will codify this allowance in State law.

On behalf of CVS Health, I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and ask for your favorable consideration in passing HB 2553 HD1 with amendments to enable pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer all vaccines that can be administered by a pharmacist, while under the supervision of a pharmacist.

Respectfully,

Carla Saporta Cheng  
Senior Director of State Government Affairs  
CVS Health

February 8, 2024

The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
The Honorable Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair  
Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**RE: SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 2553 – PHARMACISTS VACCINATION AUTHORITIES**

Chairperson Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the committee:

We thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on **HOUSE BILL 2553**, a bill that allows licensed pharmacists to independently order and administer vaccines to individuals 3 years and older. We **SUPPORT** this bill as it ensures pharmacists will be able to continue administering vaccines after their temporary federal authority to administer expires.

NCPA represents the interest of America's community pharmacists, including owners of more than 19,400 independent community pharmacies across the United States and 44 independent pharmacies in Hawaii. These Hawaii pharmacies filled over 3 million prescriptions last year, impacting the lives of thousands of patients in your state. Over 90% of Americans live within five miles of a community pharmacy,<sup>1</sup> and more than any other segment of the pharmacy industry, independent community pharmacies are often located in underserved rural and urban areas. These pharmacies are frequently the most accessible healthcare providers in many Hawaii communities and are vital in the provision of immunizations, testing, and other services. This bill will not only allow pharmacies to expand their vaccination capacity but could also be an opportunity for patients without a medical home or primary care provider to be plugged in to the healthcare system and to access other services they might not otherwise receive.

With over 900 pharmacists practicing within Hawaii, approval of this legislation will allow pharmacists, pharmacy personnel, and pharmacies to meet the demand for health care services and continue to be a gateway for patients to access quality care. Hawaii pharmacists have been administering vaccines since October 2020, when the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued guidance related to the HHS Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19.

This federal guidance also authorized qualified pharmacy technicians, acting under the supervision of a qualified pharmacist, to administer Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-authorized or FDA-licensed COVID-19 vaccines to persons ages three or older and to administer FDA-authorized or FDA-licensed ACIP-recommended vaccines to persons ages three through 18 according to Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice's (ACIP's) standard

---

<sup>1</sup> NCPDP Pharmacy File, ArcGIS Census Tract File, NACDS Economics Department.

immunization schedule.<sup>2</sup> In August 2021, this temporary federal authority was expanded to authorize qualified pharmacy technicians to administer seasonal influenza vaccines, under the supervision of a qualified pharmacist, to persons ages 19 and older consistent with ACIP recommendations.<sup>3</sup>

As beneficial as this temporary federal authority has been in expanding access to care and relieving some of the burden on an overstressed healthcare system, it is set to expire in **December 2024**. Approval of this bill will make this temporary federal authority permanent under state scope of practice, and it expands the authority to cover adult immunizations beyond influenza and COVID-19 as well.

NCPA strongly supports the Hawaii Pharmacists Association in their advocacy to make the federal PREP ACT authorities permanent for Hawaii pharmacists to order and administer vaccinations. We appreciate the committee's attention to this important public health, and we urge approval from its members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Belawoe Akwakoku". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Belawoe Akwakoku  
Associate Director, State Government Affairs  
National Community Pharmacists Association

---

<sup>2</sup> Guidance for PREP Act Coverage for Qualified Pharmacy Technicians and State-Authorized Pharmacy Interns for Childhood Vaccines, COVID-19 Vaccines, and COVID-19 Testing (October 20, 2020), <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/prep-act-guidance.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Eighth Amendment to Declaration Under the PREP Act for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19 (August 4, 2021), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-08-04/pdf/2021-16681.pdf>



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI  
PRESIDENT  
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII  
FEBURARY 8, 2024  
Re: HB 2553 HD1 RELATING TO RELATING TO PHARMACISTS.**

Good afternoon, Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce. I am Tina Yamaki, President of the Retail Merchants of Hawaii and I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii was founded in 1901, RMH is a statewide, not for profit trade organization committed to the growth and development of the retail industry in Hawaii. Our membership includes small mom & pop stores, large box stores, resellers, luxury retail, department stores, shopping malls, local, national, and international retailers, chains, and everyone in between.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii is in SUPPORT of HB 2553 HD1. This measure authorizes pharmacists to administer vaccines to persons three years of age or older. Authorizes pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen if certain requirements are met; authorizes pharmacists to order vaccines for administration to persons between the ages of three and seventeen; and is effective 7/1/3000.

Pharmacists are one of the most accessible healthcare providers and are a strongly trusted resource across our islands in many communities, especially those that are remote. This bill will extend the services already permitted in the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which is set to expire at the end of 2024.

We would like to request that this be extended to 3 years and older to cover adult patients as well.

The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees did provide the services described in this bill. It is our understanding that Pharmacy Interns do receive vaccination training and obtain an immunization certificate that is the same as the nationally recognized credential as a licensed pharmacist. With this knowledge and training, we saw many interns at the Covid Vaccine sites throughout the State who were actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic, including participating in the immunization of children under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist. During the pandemic pharmacy interns demonstrated that they could provide the services described in this bill. More importantly, members of the public and other health care providers have come to depend on them to provide these services, especially now where Hawai'i is perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers. We should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

We urge you to pass this measure. Mahalo again for this opportunity to testify.



**MOLOKA'I DRUGS, INC.**  
**EST. 1935**

February 7, 2024

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2553 – RELATING TO PHARMACISTS – Vaccination Administration**

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the committee:

As a rural healthcare provider, access to comprehensive, high-quality health care services is our mission at Moloka'i Drugs. On behalf of our employees and patients, I am testifying in favor of HB2553, which will allow our professional staff to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. We are currently immunizing children from 14-17 years old with signed permission from a parent or guardian. We also support HB2553 as it ensures our pharmacists and our professional staff will be able to continue administering vaccines after the temporary federal authority to administer expires.

This bill will also help our island's residents with six-days-a-week access. Moloka'i Drugs is open Monday to Saturday and services all customers needing vaccines. Currently, only two facilities -- Moloka'i General Hospital's Outpatient Clinic and Moloka'i Community Health Center -- vaccinate children under 14; you need to make an appointment in advance and registered as a patient of either medical facility. Both are open only Monday to Friday and closed on all major holidays.

At Moloka'i Drugs, all of our vaccinations are completed in a private, immunization room we specifically built in 2021. All of our vaccines are available via walk-in and no appointment is necessary.

Every week, we are asked by parents if we can give flu or other shots to their children. Pre-COVID-19, Moloka'i public school students were able to garner flu shots at their schools. Post-COVID-19, this is not an option.

Moloka'i is a medically underserved area and it is critical that we have access to serving our children. Moloka'i Drugs is here to serve our children. Therefore, we ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns to immunize from age three and vote in support of HB2553. It is critical that we increase access to comprehensive, high-quality healthcare services on all islands.

Sincerely,

*Kimberly Mikami Svetin /s/*

Kimberly Mikami Svetin  
President  
Moloka'i Drugs, Inc.  
P.O. Box 558  
Kaunakakai, HI 96748  
Work 808-553-5790





Testimony presented before the  
House Committee on Consumer Protection  
February 8, 2024

Corrie L. Sanders on behalf of  
The Hawai'i Pharmacists Association (HPhA)

To the honorable Chair Sayama and members of the Consumer Protection Committee,

I am writing to emphasize the critical importance of HB2553 and to offer the unwavering support of the Hawaii Pharmacists Association (HPhA).

HPhA acknowledges the pressing need for this measure, particularly in addressing the ongoing provider shortage in our state, specifically in remote and medically underserved areas. We would like to underscore that providers and patients alike have become increasingly dependent on the accessibility and expertise of community pharmacies in delivering essential vaccination services.

Since enactment of the PREP Act, the success of community pharmacy led vaccination efforts has become evident with positive outcomes contributing to public health. It is essential to recognize that this has not only improved access but has also become an integral component of Hawaii's public health infrastructure.

Additional points for consideration specifically surrounding documentation and consumer protection:

- All vaccinations administered in a community pharmacy must be reported to the Hawaii State Immunization Registry (HIR) within 5 business days. All providers can gain access to HIR to prevent gaps in communication and vaccination duplication.
- Though the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) does not currently regulate pharmacy technicians, the responsibility of vaccine immunization ultimately falls underneath the pharmacist, not the DCCA. There would be no additional workload required by the DCCA. This is similar to medical assistants, also not regulated by the DCCA, that are vaccinating in other settings underneath the direct supervision of a licensed healthcare provider.
- Pharmacy technicians and interns are currently required to become nationally certified in immunization administration prior to vaccinating patients. This is also mandated in HB2553.
- There is a shortage of pharmacy technicians across the state, and vaccination authorities provide opportunities for increased salaries and professional growth that currently are lacking.
- Vaccination administration allows for community pharmacies to have an additional revenue stream outside of medication dispensing, which is significantly impactful for our independent community pharmacies in remote locations.
- There is literature from the Pacific Research Institute that supports shifting vaccinations to pharmacies significantly reduces costs to both health systems and patients.<sup>1</sup>

1. Wingarden W. *Promoting Access and Lowering Costs in Healthcare: The Case of Empowering Pharmacists to Increase Adult Vaccination Rates*; 2018. Accessed Jan 28, 2024. Accessed from: [https://www.pacificresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/AdultVaccination\\_F\\_web.pdf](https://www.pacificresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/AdultVaccination_F_web.pdf)

Pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns have proven themselves capable, providing a reliable and accessible avenue for vaccination services in Hawai'i for nearly four years. Discontinuation would create a void in healthcare delivery, leading to potential delays in immunization and exacerbating existing healthcare disparities. **It would be a public health concern to abruptly remove these provisions from the healthcare teams, including pharmacy interns and technicians, that have already established proof of concept in their ability to provide vaccinations to our communities.**

We look forward to working towards a solution that leverages the community pharmacy workforce to continue this necessary initiative for years to come.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Corrie L. Sanders". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Corrie L. Sanders, PharmD., BCACP, CPGx  
President, Hawai'i Pharmacists Association



DATE: February 8, 2024

TO: Representative Mark Nakashima  
Chair, House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Representative Jackson Sayama  
Vice-Chair, House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

*Submitted Via Capitol Website*

FROM: Tiffany Yajima / Mihoko Ito

RE: **H.B. 2553, H.D.1 – Relating to Pharmacists**  
**Hearing Date: Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.**  
**Conference Room: 329**

---

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce:

We submit this testimony on behalf of Walgreen Co. (“Walgreens”). Walgreens operates stores at more than 8,200 locations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. In Hawaii, Walgreens now has 19 stores on the islands of Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii.

Walgreens submits this testimony in **support** of H.B. 2553, H.D.1, which authorizes pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen, if certain requirements are met, and authorizes licensed pharmacists to order and administer vaccines to persons between the ages of three and seventeen.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government issued the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) in 2020. Pursuant to the PREP Act, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns have been safely administering these vaccinations in the pharmacy setting. However, when the PREP Act expires at the end of 2024, this important health care service will no longer be available to persons ages three through ten. As a result, this limitation will have an impact on youth access to vaccinations, particularly in rural communities where pharmacies serve as crucial access points for health care.

It is for these reasons that we are in support of this measure and ask the committee to pass the bill for further discussion.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION

Hearing on Thursday, February 8, 2024 2:00PM

**Testimony in Support for HB2553**

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection,

I am writing this letter to express my wholehearted support for Bill HB2553, which aims to adopt the provisions of the PREP Act to empower pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to administer routinely recommended vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and older. I believe that this step is crucial in enhancing access to vaccinations, particularly in areas or populations with limited access to pediatricians and primary-care providers.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians play a pivotal role in healthcare, and their contribution to public health has been evident, especially during the recent COVID19 pandemic when they administered the COVID19 vaccine to nearly a third of all adults receiving the vaccine. The convenience and extended hours offered by pharmacies make them a valuable resource for vaccination services. Additionally, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are trusted healthcare professionals with established relationships with their patients, ensuring a level of comfort and familiarity that is essential in healthcare practices.

The adoption of the PREP Act provisions allowing pharmacists to administer vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and above, as well as expanding the role of trained and Nationally Certified Pharmacy Technicians, is a logical and necessary step. In Hawaii, our community has relied on pharmacies, especially during the past three years of the pandemic, to provide essential vaccination services without the need for a prescription. With the discontinuation of flu vaccinations for school-aged children at their schools, community pharmacies are uniquely positioned to fill this void and ensure that every child receives the necessary vaccinations.

Continuing to empower pharmacies to administer vaccines to individuals aged 3 and above will not only sustain access but also optimize the healthcare community's potential to keep our community healthy. This is particularly crucial in areas where there are shortages of healthcare providers or where access to medical services is limited.

I urge you to consider the importance of Bill HB2553 and its potential positive impact on public health in Hawaii. By supporting this bill, we can enhance the reach of vaccination services and contribute to the overall well-being of our community. I appreciate your dedication to public health and your consideration of this matter.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Necole Miyazaki

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024  
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION  
**Hearing on Thursday, February 8, 2024 2:00PM**  
**Testimony in Support for HB2553**

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection,  
I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to continue to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As the Clinical Services Manager at Pharmacare Hawaii, we had pharmacists actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic who have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting our citizens from potentially life-threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees were able to competently and safely provide the services described in this bill. With health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services removing patient access to pharmacies for vaccinations will put additional stress on an already strained health care system. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, our community would be unable to utilize a well-trained pharmacy workforce ready and willing to vaccinate those in need. Why lose this valuable pharmacy resource which the pandemic has shown were highly effective in reaching the masses requiring vaccination. Pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians should continue to vaccinate so we can improve overall vaccination rates in Hawaii and maintain our preparedness for any new emergencies that may arise in the future.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joy Matsuyama".

Joy Matsuyama, PharmD, BCPS

**HB-2553-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 11:51:47 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ronald Taniguchi, Pharm.D., MBA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the passage of HB2553 HD1 as written. Mahalo!

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024  
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

**Hearing on February 8th, 2024 2:00 PM**

**Testimony for HB2553 HD1**

To the honorable Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 HD1 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist at the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives that we are adequately trained to provide.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, it would put the most vulnerable segments of our population at risk. Our keiki and kupuna will lose critical access to potentially life saving immunizations.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Warmest Regards,

Chad Kawakami Pharm.D., BCPS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024  
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION  
**Hearing on Thursday, February 8, 2024 2:00PM**  
**Testimony in Support for HB2553**

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist at, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, our community would suffer. Pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians are valuable team members and are in engaged in dispensing and administering vaccinations to keep our communities safe and healthy.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,

Lehua Kay, PharmD



Date: February 6, 2024

To: The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
The Honorable Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: **Support for HB2553 HD1**, Relating to Pharmacists

Hrg: Thursday February 8, 2024 at 2:00pm via Videoconference Conference Room 329

Aloha House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

As a parent, community member, licensed pharmacist and retired Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy faculty, I am writing in **strong support of HB2553 HD1**, which authorizes pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen, if certain requirements are met, and, authorizes licensed pharmacists to order vaccines for administration to persons between the ages of three and seventeen.

This bill extends the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, set to expire at the end of 2024, which allows for pharmacists and pharmacy personnel to administer vaccines to those three years and older.

Every county in Hawai'i contains one or more regions that are medically underserved. While stakeholders across the state are working together to attract and retain qualified providers we have yet to fully utilize existing resources, including the pharmacists and pharmacy personnel conveniently accessible and available in our local communities.

During the pandemic, with PREP Act authorization, we demonstrated how pharmacists and pharmacy personnel safely, effectively and conveniently provide vaccination services to protect the wellbeing of all of the people of our communities, including our kupuna and keiki.

I **strongly support HB2553 HD1**, respectfully ask you to pass it out of committee.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Forrest Batz, PharmD  
Keaau, HI

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024

COMMITTEE CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE

Hearing on Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 2:00 PM

Testimony for HB2553 HD1

To the honorable Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama, and members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacy interns under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen, if certain requirements are met. This bill will extend the services already permitted in the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacy intern at the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, I received vaccination training and earned an immunization certificate, the same nationally recognized credential as a licensed pharmacist. With this knowledge and training, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic, including participating in the immunization of children under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist. During the pandemic, pharmacy interns demonstrated that we can provide the services described in this bill. More importantly, members of the public and other health care providers have come to depend on us to provide these services.

My personal experiences related to vaccination administration include working with people of all ages, from 3 years to 98 years, in both vaccine clinics during the Pandemic and the community pharmacy setting at Long's. Many people who came to receive a vaccine informed me that they were not able to receive the vaccine at their doctor's office. People relied on the ability to go to their pharmacy to become vaccinated. As with many community pharmacies, pharmacist staffing is limited. While I was interning at Long's, I was often told by the pharmacists that they were counting on my being there to help with the vaccines. Interns help alleviate the burden on all healthcare workers, including pharmacists. Allowing pharmacy interns to vaccinate children between the ages of three and seventeen will help ease the stress of all our healthcare workers, delaying, or even preventing, burnout.

Please allow us to continue to serve and protect the wellbeing of the people of Hawaii alongside pharmacists and pharmacy technicians by passing this bill.

Thank you,

Daniella Wallace

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniella Wallace". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first letter 'D' being significantly larger and more stylized than the rest of the name.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024  
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE  
**Hearing on Thursday, February 8, 2024 2:00 PM**  
**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2553**

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to be involved in vaccine efforts that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, our community would suffer. Pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians are valuable team members and are in engaged in dispensing and administering vaccinations to keep our communities safe and healthy.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,

Mark Mierzwa, PharmD, BCPP

**HB-2553-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 9:36:10 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nicole Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist and faculty at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, I was actively involved in the immunization efforts during the pandemic as the College of Pharmacy worked alongside the School of Medicine, School of Nursing, the DOH, and the Medical Reserve Corps to provide COVID-19 vaccination pods to quickly immunize and protect the Hawaii community. After completing the initial roll out of the COVID-19 vaccines, the need for vaccinations have not decreased. The PREP Act was put in place because of the decreased number of childhood vaccines seen in the years post-COVID-19 and the need to improve healthcare access to better protect our keiki and community. With the known physician shortage in Hawaii, it is imperative that we not reduce healthcare access.

Should the PREP Act be allowed to expire, we will likely see declining rates of childhood and other routine vaccinations, especially in rural areas. Continuing the terms of the PREP act, including the ability for certified pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations, will help to provide continued support and healthcare access to the remote and medically underserved. Continuing the eligibility of pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to children, the workflow in the community pharmacies will also be enhanced, as there are a growing number of routine vaccinations recommended each year. Additionally, the rate of vaccine preventable cancers will also decrease. HPV and Hepatitis B are known causes of cancer, and we are doing our community a disservice if we remove access to the prevention of infection and cancers.

I fully support this bill to allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii.

Nicole Young, PharmD

Associate Professor

Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, University of Hawaii at Hilo

Hearing on Wednesday, January 31, 2024 10:15 AM

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2553

To the honorable Chair Au Belatti and members of the Committee on Health and Homelessness,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacy technicians under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer vaccinations, when certain requirements are met, that include national certification and hands on immunization training. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions since COVID, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacy technician at KTA Superstores on the Big Island, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. In order to be able to take the national immunization training for pharmacy technicians, you need to first be a Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT) through the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB). I received a national immunization certification that included hands on vaccination training. The pandemic proved that pharmacy technicians with proper training can provide the services described in this bill, under the direct supervision of a pharmacist. Providers and our communities have become dependent upon the increased services provided at pharmacies. This bill is critical to sustain the community pharmacy work force.

In the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to proactive population health initiatives. Pharmacy technicians are adequately trained to administer vaccinations and should be allowed to continue given the proof of concept established through the PREP Act authorities. MA's in doctor's office are allowed to do this, with no certifications or requirements.

Should myself and my technician colleagues no longer be allowed to vaccinate, our workflow would become even more burdensome on the pharmacist and the patients, delaying how many vaccinations can be done in a given time. There is data from the CDC showing low vaccination rates in many areas of Hawaii, why would we go backwards now to hinder the efforts of increased vaccination rates that are proven to prevent disease and lower healthcare cost in the long run.

**Here on the Big Island, we serve very remote and rural communities. Everyone talks about increasing access on rural health. At KTA we are doing just that, going to the communities to provide these services, Pahala, Na'alehu, Miloli'i, Kealakekua, Captain Cook, Kona, Kohala, Waikoloa, Waimea, Honokaa, Paauilo, Laupahoehoe, Honomu, Pepeekeo, Papa'ikou, Hilo, Waiakea, Kaumana, Kea'au, HPP, Pahoa, Nanawale, Volcano. All of these places I have listed, we have gone to them, either an employer clinic, community health fair, or home-visit. A pharmacist and a CPhT who is able to vaccinate. We are making a difference.**

Also, pharmacy technicians play a crucial role in a pharmacy, ask any community pharmacist if you don't believe me. With the huge demand placed on community pharmacies and burnout happening, maintaining and recruiting pharmacy technicians has been a challenge. By passing this bill, we can work on promotion pathways and long-term careers for individuals as a technician. I recently got a grant with HPhA and PTCB to work on this exact initiative. Let's pass this bill and move the needle forward on increased access to care for ALL. Pharmacist and pharmacy technicians are on the front lines every day and so easily accessible by the public.

Please allow pharmacy technicians to continue to serve and protect the wellbeing of the people through preventative measures, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of SB2553.

**Thank you so much for your time!!**

*Christina Requelman*

Christina Method Requelman

KTA Superstores Pharmacy – Big Island - CPhT

University of Hawaii at Hilo, The Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy – Experiential Office

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION

Hearing on Thursday, February 8, 2024 2:00PM

**Testimony in Support for HB2553**

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection,

I am writing this letter to express my wholehearted support for HB2553, which aims to adopt the provisions of the PREP Act to empower pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to administer routinely recommended vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and older. I believe that this step is crucial in enhancing access to vaccinations, particularly in areas or populations with limited access to pediatricians and primary-care providers.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians play a pivotal role in healthcare, and their contribution to public health has been evident, especially during the recent COVID19 pandemic when they administered the COVID19 vaccine to nearly a third of all adults receiving the vaccine. The convenience and extended hours offered by pharmacies make them a valuable resource for vaccination services. Additionally, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are trusted healthcare professionals with established relationships with their patients, ensuring a level of comfort and familiarity that is essential in healthcare practices.

The adoption of the PREP Act provisions allowing pharmacists to administer vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and above, as well as expanding the role of trained and Nationally Certified Pharmacy Technicians, is a logical and necessary step. In Hawaii, our community has relied on pharmacies, especially during the past three years of the pandemic, to provide essential vaccination services without the need for a prescription. With the discontinuation of flu vaccinations for school-aged children at their schools, community pharmacies are uniquely positioned to fill this void and ensure that every child receives the necessary vaccinations.

Continuing to empower pharmacies to administer vaccines to individuals aged 3 and above will not only sustain access but also optimize the healthcare community's potential to keep our community healthy. This is particularly crucial in areas where there are shortages of healthcare providers or where access to medical services is limited.

I urge you to consider the importance of HB2553 and its potential positive impact on public health in Hawaii. By supporting this bill, we can enhance the reach of vaccination services and contribute to the overall well-being of our community. I appreciate your dedication to public health and your consideration of this matter.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Dayna Wong-Otis, PharmD, CDCES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024  
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION  
**Hearing on Thursday, February 8, 2024 2:00PM**  
**Testimony in Support for HB2553**

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist at KTA Superstores, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, our community would greatly be affected. The PREP Act helps us to provide care to those in medically underserved areas and helps to relieve the stress of primary care providers. With the PREP Act, it gives us and our technicians the opportunity to provide well-rounded care island wide.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Cami Kanahela



**HB-2553-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 9:44:01 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kerri Okamura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The work of pharmacists and certified pharmacy technicians during the COVID-19 pandemic helped to improve access to all vaccines in a safe manner. Continuation of the provisions of the PREP Act will ensure patients have access to immunizations. Please support this HB 2553.

**HB-2553-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:17:01 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lara Gomez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

The pandemic proved that pharmacists and other community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

The ability of pharmacy interns to vaccinate is essential for their professional development and future employment. Most pharmacies in the US expect contemporary pharmacy graduates to be able to vaccinate from their first day of employment, thereby making the ability to master this expertise as a pharmacy intern essential for positioning our graduates for future employment. Pharmacy interns in Hawaii and across the nation routinely perform vaccinations when they are on clinical rotations for their pharmacy practice experiences, and as part of community outreach activities. During the pandemic, pharmacy interns were integral to the effort to get the public vaccinated and the workflow for many pharmacies now depend on pharmacy interns to help vaccinate patients.

The role of the pharmacy technician expanded during the pandemic which played a critical role in pharmacy services. By having technicians complete the immunization training they are able to assist the pharmacist not only during healthcare crisis but during the everyday operations of the pharmacy. Improving workflow, improving efficiencies in operations all positively impact the services and healthcare of our patients in our communities.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024 COMMITTEE  
ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE  
**Hearing on Thursday, February 8, 2024 2 PM**  
**Testimony in Support for HB2553**

To the honorable Chair Mark M. Nakashima and members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

I am testifying in **favor** of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist at Longs Pharmacy in Maui, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, our community would suffer greatly. This would negatively impact accessibility to and wait times for vaccines (and prescriptions) within all pharmacies across the state of Hawai'i. We serve a very hard-working, busy community. Many who do not have the time to make an appointment in advance, or wait long hours at the pharmacy for vaccine(s). Our community members are doing their part and following the recommendations of our legislation to "get vaccinated." They are doing this to help protect one another from deadly illnesses, and ultimately decrease hospitalizations and all of the burden and negative financial impact that these illnesses bring. During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us lost our family members and friends. I myself lost a grandparent to COVID-19. We also lost jobs and financial security. Sadly, this has led to some of us losing our homes here in Hawai'i. Vaccines prevent illness, save lives, and keep our people HOME. *WE* have the opportunity to make these life-saving vaccines more accessible and easy, quick, safe and convenient for our entire community to receive by **supporting** HB2553.

Allowing our technicians and interns to administer COVID and Flu vaccines (and hopefully *all* vaccines in the near future), offsets the workload of every single Pharmacist in Hawai'i in a **HUGE** way. Many are not aware that Pharmacists are often juggling 5-10+ tasks all at once at any given time. This includes, but is not limited to: typing, filling and verifying prescriptions for multiple patients in less than 15 minutes, resolving drug interactions and discrepancies with physicians via phone (please keep in mind that reaching 1 physician's office can take up to 30 mins-1 hour and will often result in a call back - no resolution), answering numerous phone calls, retrieval of verbal orders via phone, resolving insurance discrepancies and patient complaints, ringing out prescriptions at the register, counseling patients at pick up, answering questions and making over the counter recommendations to multiple patients, etc. often, **ALL AT ONCE**. The list of tasks and responsibilities seems endless, and we are doing all of these tasks in addition to verifying, preparing, and administering 1-4 vaccines to patients who are both walking in and to those who have made appointments online. Please keep in mind, most of our pharmacies are running

short-staffed, with not enough technician coverage on most days. This is everyday reality in our pharmacies and **THIS IS NOT SAFE!**

The fact that certified technicians are able to help the pharmacist with this single task, makes pharmacy workflow A LOT more manageable, but *most importantly* much more **SAFE** for all patients and for the community overall. Words can't even express how beneficial our technician immunizers have been to our pharmacies and pharmacists, and what a substantial impact they have had on the entire community, since the PREP act was authorized and put into place. It often feels as if we would not have made it through the COVID-19 pandemic, or multiple Flu season(s) without their help. The bottom line is, Pharmacies are an integral part of our healthcare system. Pharmacists play an important role in ensuring access to vaccines and improving health outcomes. However, we need your continued support to help make our profession and workplace **SAFER**, and to help us continue keeping our community healthy and well, in the best capacity possible. Pharmacists took an oath to be there for our community, and favoring this bill will allow us to continue serving the patients we love and care about to the best of our abilities. Ultimately it is about THEM: *OUR* grandparents, parents, siblings, children, grandchildren, uncles, aunties... all of *OUR OHANA*. THEY are who we are serving and protecting every single day, and their lives matter!

We ask that you please allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in **favor** of this bill.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carli L. Owan', written in a cursive style.

Carli L. Owan Ho'opi'i, RPh

Pharmacy Manager

Longs Pharmacy, Store #10848

**HB-2553-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 12:46:58 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Derek Govin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Testimony in Support for HB2553**

**To the honorable Chair Mark M. Nakashima and members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,**

**I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.**

**As a patient who has experienced firsthand the challenges of accessing affordable healthcare in the state, I am writing to express my strong support for HB 2553 HD1. This bill will help streamline the process for patients to receive the care they need by allowing technicians and pharmacy interns to provide me with the necessary vaccines without the need to wait on the pharmacist who is juggling everything on their plate, while allowing me to not have to go to my primary care provider (PCP) to get said vaccinations. As a patient and someone who needs regular consultation regarding my medications, I often speak with pharmacists about my care. Passing this bill will allow for greater impact of healthcare on patients throughout the state and allow for a healthier community.**

**In conclusion, I urge lawmakers to support HB 2553 HD1 and prioritize the needs of patients by expanding access to telehealth services. This bill has the potential to improve healthcare access and affordability for all patients, and I am grateful for the opportunity to share my perspective as a patient of pharmacy services. Thank you for your attention to this important issue. We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.**

**Respectfully,**

**Derek Govin**



**HB-2553-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 1:07:23 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Allison Hamada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support for HB2553

To the honorable Chair Nakashima and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection, I am writing this letter to express my support for Bill HB2553, which aims to adopt the provisions of the PREP Act to empower pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to administer routinely recommended vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and older. I believe that is crucial in increasing patient access to vaccinations.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians play a pivotal role in healthcare, and our contribution to public health has been evident, especially during the recent COVID19 pandemic. The convenience and extended hours offered by pharmacies make them a valuable resource for vaccination services. Additionally, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are trusted healthcare professionals with established relationships with their patients, ensuring a level of comfort and familiarity that is essential in healthcare practices.

The adoption of the PREP Act provisions allowing pharmacists to administer vaccinations to individuals aged 3 and above, as well as expanding the role of trained and Nationally Certified Pharmacy Technicians, is a logical and necessary step. In Hawaii, our community has relied on pharmacies, to provide essential vaccination services without the need for a prescription. Community pharmacies are uniquely positioned to ensure that every child receives the necessary vaccinations. Continuing to empower pharmacies to administer vaccines to individuals aged 3 and above will not only sustain access but also optimize our ability to keep our communities healthy.

I urge you to consider the importance of Bill HB2553 and its potential positive impact on public health in Hawaii. By supporting this bill, we can enhance the reach of vaccination services and contribute to the overall well-being of our community. I appreciate your dedication to public health and your consideration of this matter.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this issue.

Sincerely,

Allison Hamada





HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION  
OF 2024 COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

**Hearing on Wednesday, February 8, 2024 2:00 PM**

**Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2553 HD1**

To the honorable Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 HD1 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist at KTA Pharmacy, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens, in our state, from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, our community would lose crucial accessibility of vaccination administration to pediatric patients at their local pharmacies. Many patients have expressed extreme gratitude and appreciation for being able to vaccinate their families at the pharmacy. Doctors and other healthcare professionals have expressed similar sentiment as it reduces their workday demand and allows them to provide additional services. Both doctors and patients have become dependent on pharmacists administering vaccines to pediatric patients. Many families present to the pharmacy with or without recommendations by other healthcare professionals. It has become the norm to get all vaccines from the pharmacy, and it is convenient for those who live far from town but close to their local pharmacies.

Lastly, pharmacy technicians play a crucial role in the pharmacy workflow process. Without them, the pharmacy would not run smoothly, and patients would not be able to get quality patient care they deserve. As prescription volume and responsibilities of a pharmacist increases, the need for pharmacy technician assistance increases. When given an incentive, technicians were willing to assist the pharmacist in vaccine administration to ensure workflow remains efficient.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,



Faith Hicks, Pharm D.  
Pharmacy Practice Instructor  
& Relief Pharmacist  
KTA Superstores

**LATE**

**HB-2553-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:12:10 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shogo Miyagi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024  
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE**

Hearing on Wednesday, February 8, 2024, 2:00 PM

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2553

To the Honorable Chair Mark M. Nakashima and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce,

I am Shogo John Miyagi, PharmD, PhD, MS, BCPPS, a clinical pharmacy instructor at the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy and practicing pediatric clinical pharmacist and pharmacologist at the Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children. My experience extends across California, Washington DC, and the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA). I am writing unequivocally in strong support of HB2553, which authorizes pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccines to individuals aged three to seventeen.

Pharmacists are rigorously trained during school and have proven to be well-equipped for providing vaccinations. This was especially evident during the COVID-19 pandemic and underscored our role as providers of public health. I myself gave vaccinations to the general public at the HPH Pier 2 COVID clinic once the vaccine became available. And all this medical information was passed along to pediatricians through the Hawai'i Immunization Registry, which is still currently used.

The concern raised by some pediatricians—that pharmacist-administered vaccinations could lead to a decrease in wellness visits—does not align with observed realities. In fact, children who are most likely to miss wellness visits are often the ones with lower rates of immunizations. These are precisely the children who stand to benefit most from pharmacist involvement. Additionally, it's worth noting that many parents who choose to vaccinate their children at pharmacies do so either after-school or after-work hours—times when traditional pediatrician offices are often closed.

Together, these reasons highlight the complementary nature of continuing to allow pharmacists to vaccinate children without detracting from the essential services provided by pediatricians.

Given the fact that pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare providers and there is an ongoing healthcare worker shortage in the state, the continued integration of pharmacists in the vaccination of children addresses current disparities in providing equitable medical care.

For the health and wellbeing of our keiki, I strongly urge your support for HB2553 to continue utilizing the full capabilities of pharmacists.

Sincerely,  
Shogo John Miyagi, PharmD, PhD, MS, BCPPS  
Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024  
COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE  
**Hearing on Thursday, February 8, 2024 2 PM**  
**Testimony in Support for HB2553**

**LATE**

To the honorable Chair Mark M. Nakashima and members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist at Longs Drugs, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, our community would lose access to essential vaccines due to a shortage of healthcare professionals serving underserved populations and those with limited access to medical care and are dependent on these services.

Pharmacy technicians are integral to this initiative, providing vaccines to individuals within the established workflow, freeing the Pharmacists up to provide important medication counseling and screening.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,

Monica Reineke, PharmD

**LATE**

**HB-2553-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 10:38:04 AM  
Testimony for CPC on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Parriott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2024 COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

Hearing on Thursday, February 8, 2024 2 PM

Testimony in Support for HB2553

To the honorable Chair Mark M. Nakashima and members of the Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

I am testifying in favor of HB2553 which will allow pharmacists, pharmacy interns and pharmacy technicians to administer vaccinations to persons between the ages of three and seventeen. This bill represents an extension of the federal emergency authorization PREP Act, which allowed for these actions, and is set to expire at the end of 2024.

As a pharmacist at Longs Drugs, I was actively involved in the immunization effort during the pandemic and have continued to administer vaccinations that are critical for protecting citizens in our state from life threatening diseases. The pandemic proved that community pharmacy employees provide the services described in this bill, with health care providers and our communities now depending on us for access to these services. Additionally, in the setting of a healthcare crisis in Hawai'i perpetuated by shortages in healthcare workers, we should be leveraging all qualified healthcare entities to contribute to population health initiatives.

Should my colleagues and I have the provisions of the PREP Act removed, our community would lose access to some of their most trusted and familiar health care providers. I have noticed that many pharmacy technicians share similar backgrounds to the patients in the communities they serve. Having the encouragement and support of an immunizer who looks and sounds like the patients has been helpful in overcoming vaccine hesitancy as well as providing an extra level of comfort during the stressful event. One of our most common positive feedback items from patients is from the care they receive from our tech and intern immunizers. It would be a shame to unnecessarily remove an aspect of healthcare so clearly appreciated by our community.

One pharmacy I work at, it seems the patients only want to talk to the technician, who understands their language, and not the person in the white coat. She is a quick, efficient, and

capable immunizer. Losing access to her as an immunizer could put the whole community at risk since she is so trusted by this group of patients.

What has been clearly shown during the pandemic is that technicians and interns are fully capable of providing excellent patient care through immunizing. What has always been true is the constant demands and overlapping priorities of the pharmacy industry make providing individualized care difficult and stressful for the pharmacists. Having technicians and interns available to provide individualized care for the patients has allowed pharmacists to improve their care for patients in other areas. It has improved the overall quality of pharmacy care by making our pharmacies more efficient, allowing pharmacists to spend time on drug interactions, doctor calls, and patients consultations. This is most starkly true during high demand immunization times like flu season and when a new COVID shot is introduced. During these times, when patients are anxious and fearful for their health, the availability of technician and intern immunizers has been invaluable.

When a mom is worried about her getting her sick child an antibiotic as soon as possible and her parents a flu shot and Covid booster at the same time, it so good that the pharmacist can help with first while a technician takes care of the latter. The reduction in stress from the improved efficiency in care delivery on the part of the patients is invaluable. Without the technicians, what could be done in 15 minutes could take 30-45 minutes due to competing demands and interruptions.

It has also been amazing to see the technicians who stepped up and acquired the extra training to become immunizers take ownership of the role and become pillars of the team. The technician immunizer role has provided an opportunity for advancement in the healthcare field that was previously unavailable to technicians. I seems to have allowed them to become more committed to their jobs and take more pride in their work and their contributions to the team.

Overall I would say that technician and intern immunizations have had an overwhelmingly positive impact on the provision of pharmacy care, the pharmacy community, and the community at large.

We ask that you allow pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns to continue to protect the wellbeing of the people, including kupuna and keiki, of Hawaii by voting in favor of this bill.

Warm regards,

Joseph Parriott, Pharm. D

